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THE AWARD-WINNING INDEPENDENT: EDITOR OF THE YEAR, CORRESPONDENT OF THE YEAR

THE INDEPENDENT

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NEW SPORT SECTION



Brown to give 'children's Budget'

GORDON BROWN will unveil a "Budget for families" tomorrow that hands more state help to poor families without launching an all-out attack on the middle classes.

The Chancellor, whose handling of the economy is praised today in a glowing report by the International Monetary Fund, plans to make the family the centrepiece of his Budget by increasing child benefit. It will already rise from £11.45 to £14.40 a week for the first child next month and the proposed rise for each other child, from £9.30 to £9.60, could now be raised further.

Mr Brown said yesterday: "One theme of my Budget is... that supporting families by supporting children is not only good in itself but the best investment for any country in its future."

The Chancellor, who may also increase state benefits for the poorest families, will announce his long-promised 10p starting rate of income tax. This will help the low paid and mean a "tax cut for all", but it may not begin to take effect until April of next year.

Mr Brown wants to tax the child benefit payments of higher rate taxpayers but has decided to delay the introduction of the controversial move. He and Tony Blair agreed that to avoid alienating "middle England," sensitive changes will be phased in rather than introduced in one "big bang."

But the Prime Minister is believed to have endorsed Mr Brown's plans to abolish mortgage interest tax relief (MIRAS), a move that will hit many of the voters Mr Blair has wooed. It has already been cut to 10p in the pound and the Treasury believes that, with interest rates

falling, the time is right to scrap the relief.

Mr Brown's preparations for his third Budget were given a big boost by the IMF report. Its annual assessment heaps praise on the Chancellor for "skilful management" of the economy and an "impressive" performance.

The world's economic overseer found more scope for interest rates to fall, downgrading its growth forecast for 1999 slightly to 0.8 per cent. But it said the slowdown would be both gentle and short-lived.

Granting independence to the Bank of England, and the

way it has reacted swiftly to weaker growth, sets an example to the rest of the world, according to the IMF.

Poor pensioners can expect help from the Budget but motorists and smokers look certain to be hit by the usual above-inflation increase in the duties on fuel and cigarettes.

The three main themes will be families, helping people off welfare into work and boosting enterprise. Mr Brown's determination to "tackle inequality at source" has been reinforced by a Treasury study that found children's prospects are heavily shaped by the wealth of

their families. It will say: "Eighty per cent of boys whose fathers were in the top quarter of income distribution end up in the top half of income distribution. Just over a third of boys with parents in the bottom quarter manage to move to the top half."

The Chancellor will expand the New Deal programme for the unemployed to include the over-50s, who will be offered tax-free credits and a minimum income guarantee to lure them back into the jobs market.

Stephen Byers, the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, will on Wednesday

unveil a series of measures to boost Britain's competitiveness, including a new bureau for small businesses, which are increasingly concerned about red tape.

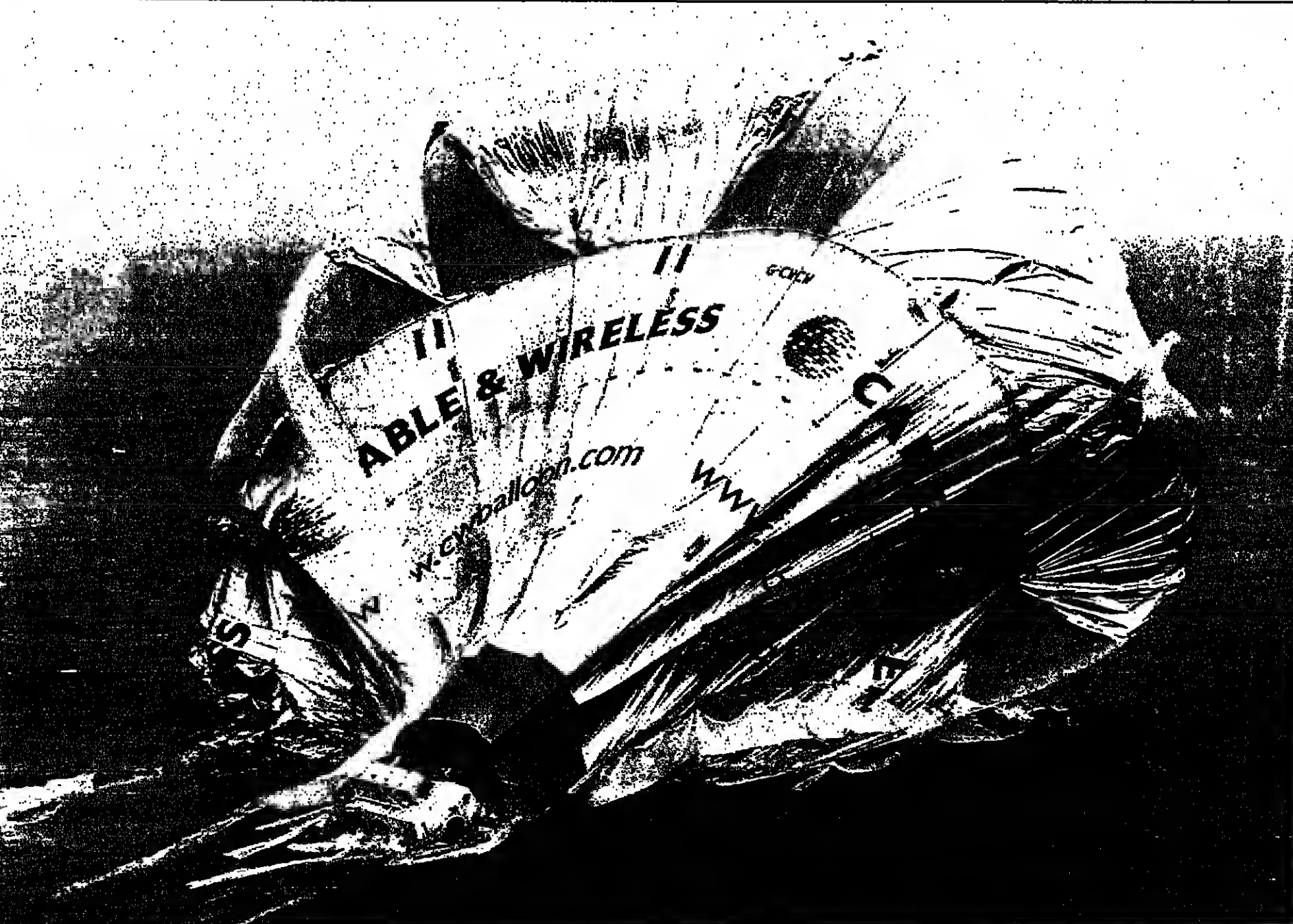
Rhodri Morgan, the Labour MP who narrowly failed to become the party's leader in the Welsh Assembly, suggested on BBC's *On the Record* television programme yesterday that Mr Brown's strategy was "redistribution by stealth". "What you do now is to find a method of taxing the better off without them noticing... it means you don't make a virtue out of increasing people's taxes and

telling them that you've increased their taxes."

Francis Maude, the shadow Chancellor, said: "This is a Government which was elected on a promise not to raise taxes at all but which is now cynically and deliberately hitting Britain's workers, pensioners, savers and businesses with taxation by stealth."

Kenneth Clarke, the former Tory Chancellor, accused Mr Brown of leaking his measures to newspapers, saying such action was "deplorable".

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Britons Andy Elson and Collin Prescott, who tried to circumnavigate the globe in a balloon, were forced to ditch in the sea 200 miles off Japan yesterday. Story page 4 AP

Kubrick, rare genius of the cinema, dies

STANLEY KUBRICK, one of the century's most talented film directors and a legendary recluse, died yesterday, months before the release of his first film for over a decade.

American-born Kubrick, 70, who settled in England in the 1960s, died at his Hertfordshire home, Childwickbury Manor, outside St Albans.

Kubrick made a series of critically received films during his 40-year career, including *Spartacus*, *Lolita*, *Dr Strangelove*, *The Shining* and *Full Metal Jacket*, about the Vietnam war, released in 1987.

He was best-known for his space epic 2001: *A Space Odyssey* and *A Clockwork Orange*, banned in this country for more than 20 years, at his insistence. He was shocked by the copycat violence spawned by his adaptation of the Anthony Burgess novel.

Tributes were led last night

by Michael Winner, his friend and fellow director, who described Kubrick as "one of the greatest geniuses since cinema evolved... He was unique."

The film critic Barry Norman said: "He was incredibly meticulous in all his films. He was very prickly about criticism, but appreciative of people who liked his movies." Mark Batey, a spokesman for the British Film Institute, said: "This is a huge loss. He was one of the landmark directors of the century, who helped to define cinema."

Kubrick's long-awaited film, *Eyes Wide Shut*, is due for release this summer after more than two years in the making. Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman, the stars of the film, said: "He was like family to us and we are in shock and devastated."

The last autocrat, David Thomson, page 3

Woodhead: Teachers call for inquiry

TEACHERS' LEADERS demanded a government inquiry yesterday into fresh allegations over the conduct of Chris Woodhead, the Chief Inspector of Schools.

They claimed that if the allegations against him, that he had an affair with a pupil while teacher at her school, were true then he should be sacked.

The latest row follows revelations in *The Independent* earlier this year that Mr Woodhead had told a meeting of student teachers that relationships between pupils and teachers could be "experiential and educative". He later apologised for the remark amid a barrage of criticism, although he retained the support of ministers.

Under the Sexual Offences

(Amendment) Bill, currently passing through the Commons, teachers face up to two years in jail if they have sex or "any sexual activity" with pupils aged under 18 at their school.

Last night, heads called on Tony Blair to investigate the latest claims, which were made yesterday in a Sunday newspaper by Mr Woodhead's former wife, Cathy.

She claimed that Mr Woodhead had admitted to an affair with Amanda Johnston, a pupil at Gordano School near Bristol. Mr Woodhead has always maintained that the relationship did not start until they had both left the school.



Woodhead: Accused of lies

But in a newspaper article yesterday Mrs Woodhead wrote: "I have become increasingly aware that my silence has condoned his lying and, despite further pressure, I am no longer willing to stand back and see this continue."

Yesterday, David Hart, general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, said: "If the allegations are proved to be true then I think in the interests of all concerned a parting of the ways is inevitable."

"It's clear beyond doubt that he has been lying then there is no alternative to his going. The Government cannot just sit on its thumbs. It is no longer a question of whether the Chief Inspector made indiscreet comments to a group of univer-

sity students. It is a question of whether the Chief Inspector lied on television and elsewhere."

John Dunford, general secretary of the Secondary Heads Association, said Mr Woodhead's "position becomes increasingly untenable" if the allegations prove to be true.

"Ofsted [Office for Standards in Education] has such an influence on the lives of so many teachers and children it is essential to have someone of complete integrity at the head of it. It is necessary for this to be investigated. It behoves the Prime Minister to investigate this, otherwise the credibility of Chris Woodhead is damaged."

"Mr Woodhead seems to claim that he is responsible to the Prime Minister and if that

is the case the Prime Minister will want to know the answer to some questions," he said.

Peter Smith, general secretary of the Association of Teachers and Lecturers, added: "The fundamental question is: has he, as his wife alleges, consistently lied about this relationship? If that is the case, he must ask himself whether he has compromised his moral authority to continue as Chief Inspector of Schools."

Senior government sources declined to comment on the claims.

Mr Woodhead said last night: "I have got nothing to add to what I am already on record as saying, nothing else. My position is perfectly clear and it has been clear for four years."

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HOME NEWS/3

Last autocrat of the movies leaves a rich legacy from his obsessive odyssey



Stanley Kubrick: Obsessive search for perfection

STANLEY KUBRICK's biographer Michael Ciment called him "one of the most demanding, most original and most visionary film-makers of our time". The only superlative he omitted was, the most reclusive.

No one in the world of film disagreed with any of these assertions yesterday as news spread of Kubrick's death just a week after his latest movie, *Eyes Wide Shut* - filmed 12 years after his last movie, *Full Metal Jacket*, and so long in gestation (two and a half years) that some forecast it would never be completed - was finally finished and viewed by Warner Brothers.

"He was the last great artist of the cinema," said Frederic Raphael last night, who wrote the screenplay for *Eyes Wide Shut*, which will star Nicole Kidman and Tom Cruise. Kubrick had triumphed over the "Hollywood money machine" to make the movies he had wanted to make, said Mr Raphael.

And to take as long as he wanted to make them. For Kubrick made just 10 feature films in 31 years. It was definitely a case of quality over quantity. His films won him eight Oscars and 14 nominations. Four of them, *Paths of Glory*, *Dr Strangelove*, *2001: A Space Odyssey* and *A Clockwork Orange* are judged by his peers as among the best in the history of film.

It was doubtful, said Mr Raphael, that anyone would again have the "will, authority and nerve" to make the stand that Kubrick, the doctor's son from the Bronx, had made for art against commercialism.

The film critic Alexander Walker, who wrote a book on Kubrick and knew him for 30 years, said the man who also gave the world *Lolita* and *The Shining* was "the most original film-maker of his generation... and the most audacious."

Mr Walker said that almost every film he made seemed to speak for the times, and to say what ordinary people were feeling. An extraordinary feat for a man who lived in virtual isolation in England, so terrified of travel that he filmed *Eyes Wide Shut* at Pinewood Studios, because it was just a short drive from his manor house in St Albans, Hertfordshire. Even so, getting to the studios could be a tortuous process. For his driver was not allowed to travel faster than 30mph.

Mr Walker said it was amazing that Kubrick had managed to complete his last work. His death, however, had still robbed him of the chance to make the legendary Kubrick revisions, which recognised on end.

For he was never really done with a movie. "He was an utter perfectionist," said Mr Walker. "He would alter the movie even after it opened, tightening a little here or there. Only Stanley Kubrick would be allowed to do that after release."

Only Stanley Kubrick would have been allowed to get away with many things. Many thought of him as paranoid and a megalomaniac, and the signs are all there in the man idolised by other film-makers such as Martin Scorsese and Steven Spielberg.

The reclusiveness was real. When George Lucas or Spielberg came to London they dined with Kubrick. But otherwise he tended to shun company.

And his obsessive search for perfection made him a control freak on the set. He was very tough on actors. Another biographer, John Baxter, said that actors were drawn to him because of his unquestioned skill but they only ever worked for him once.

One musical director condemned Kubrick as either "an enslaver or just totally insensitive". Screen tough guy



Kubrick made the movies he wanted to, at his own pace - just 10 feature films in 31 years, including (clockwise from bottom left) 'Paths of Glory', 'Lolita', '2001: A space odyssey', 'Spartacus', 'A Clockwork Orange' and 'The Shining'

Kirk Douglas, who starred in Kubrick's *Spartacus*, called him "a cold bastard" and even more memorably a "talented shit".

And Malcolm McDowell, the star of *A Clockwork Orange*, claimed he was traumatised for years after making it. McDowell would not allow his genius status because of his "lack of humanity". "Extraordinary, yes. Brilliant, yes," he said. "But as a human being - that's a test he doesn't do well." Critics claim there is a coldness to his films.

If Kubrick put actors through hell, he was undoubtedly going

through the same horror. Perfection was taken to its limits, with sometimes 100 takes for just one scene. No themes seem to link his films. All they seem to share is his deep desire to make the best movie in a given genre. Mr Raphael suggests that real artists can be forgiven for not being nice. "You take real artists as they come," he said last night. Whatever Kidman and Cruise made of their work experience with Kubrick they are yet to fully reveal. But they now have the distinction of starring in the master's final offering. The movie is due out in the United States on 18 July.

LIFE IN FILMS

1955 *Killer's Kiss*. The first major feature. A prizefighter risks death to rescue lover from her gangster boyfriend.

1955 *Fear and Desire*. Kubrick produced, directed, photographed and edited low-budget war drama.

1955 *The Killing*. Sterling Hayden starred in classic heist movie in which \$2m is stolen from a racetrack; the device of narrating the same events by different characters inspired *Reservoir Dogs*.

1957 *Paths of Glory*. First of Kubrick's great anti-war movies. Kirk Douglas starred in story of three soldiers court-martialled for cowardice amid the incompetence of senior officers.

1958 *Spartacus*. Douglas again in the story of a slave revolt in ancient Rome. Kubrick was brought in as a hired hand by Douglas but effectively took over.

1962 *Lolita*. Based on Vladimir Nabokov's tale of obsession with a young girl, Kubrick had to film with the American censors breathing down his neck. James Mason brilliant as Humbert Humbert.

1964 *Dr Strangelove*. A satire on the madness of nuclear war, with Peter Sellers in three roles, ending with Slim Pickens on an atomic bomb dropping into Armageddon and Vera Lynn singing 'We'll Meet Again'.

1968 *2001: A Space Odyssey*. Arguably Kubrick's most famous and best film. Based on the Arthur C Clarke story, the cut from apes to space stations circling the earth is a great cinematic moment.

1971 *A Clockwork Orange*. Based on Anthony Burgess's novel, the tale of a gang of violent young men, led by Malcolm McDowell, was withdrawn by Kubrick after it allegedly inspired copycat attacks.

1975 *Barry Lyndon*. An adaptation of Thackeray's novel. It was a technical marvel (some of it was shot by candlelight) as well as being stupefyingly dull.

1980 *The Shining*. His adaptation of Stephen King's novel was panned, despite an astonishing performance from Jack Nicholson. Subsequently hailed as a horror classic.

1985 *Full Metal Jacket*. A harrowing tale of Vietnam, partly shot in a disused gasworks in east London. Kubrick had to import dozens of palm trees.

1999 *Eyes Wide Shut*. Kubrick had finished shooting this tale of sexual obsession with Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman but was still involved in post-production. Due for release this summer and now his epitaph. Will it live up to its predecessors?

Master of film-making who kept the money men at bay



DAVID THOMSON

THERE HAD been rumours in the past couple of years that Stanley Kubrick was ill; and even that his organism might be housing the error that would eliminate him.

That is a Kubrickian way of putting it, not a bad joke; he saw human beings and our social groupings as machines or games in which some mad rule might carry the system out of control. But if you waited long enough you could hear nearly any rumour or story about Stanley Kubrick.

His saying so little about himself only urged the rest of us into speculation. Did he intend that? Was it even his most personal way of transmitting story to the world? Or was he just a very shy, guarded, not to say obsessive and paranoid figure who hardly trusted himself to speak?

He meant everything to the world of film, not least because, in times when great films are few and far between, he was in possession of a new work, *Eyes Wide Shut*, that might count among his greatest, and most controversial.

For this time, Kubrick was taking on maybe the human being's most passionate and essential "error" - sex. If there was anyone out counting the days to the announced July opening of *Eyes Wide Shut*, wondering with true cu-

riosity and every lewd anticipation, how much the film would reveal of Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman, there is now added this great mystery: was the film finished; or did he die with some last questions, cuts or marvels of sound as yet undecided?

There will be time for critics and historians to dispute whether Kubrick was a boy wonder, a master, a genius, a wizard manipulator, or a great artist, the same sort of debate over Alfred Hitchcock and Orson Welles.

However one elects to answer the question, Kubrick from a very early age insisted on being the maker and master of his films. Whether he liked or wanted it or not, he became known as the epitome of single-minded dedication, of the search for perfectionism, having everyone do it all over and over again, until he was

satisfied with the result. If he was ever satisfied.

As such, he made large films - huge subjects, with new techniques, enormous budgets and seemingly indefinite schedules.

He came to Britain from America in the late Fifties, in part because of dismay at America, because he might be hidden in the countryside north of London, and also because the maker of *2001* was afraid of flying.

But the decision had another result - Kubrick was thousands of miles from Warner Brothers, his invariable source of funding, unwilling to tell it what he was doing or why, or what progress he was making, but so sure of himself that he defied it to not to keep paying the bills.

The real wonder lay in the fact that no Kubrick film had made real money since the Sixties. Yet no one had the courage to raise doubts.

It was easy to argue with some of Kubrick's films: *Full Metal Jacket* seemed broken on the decision to shoot in Britain, and on its limited view of military dehumanisation; the pretentiousness of much of *Barry Lyndon* hardly seemed commensurate with the passing of its hours; even *2001* can be regarded as empty, pretentious and helplessly

infatuated with machinery.

But Kubrick saw our time falling for the same mistakes, and he may have intended *2001* as a model of waste and doodling introspection. Never mind: no film so marked our own need to consider space.

Then there were masterpieces, some as small and intricate and self-sufficient as *The Killing*; some as vast, infinite and gloomy about creative enterprise as *The Shining*. Some were simply as clever and droll as *Lolita*, *Dr Strangelove* or *A Clockwork Orange*, films that did the impossible and managed to present underground anxieties we were supposed to keep in the dark.

No director knew more about photography, lenses and film emulsion. Others argued that no other great director was so little interested in people. But perhaps that is the way the world and our discourse are moving.

In many ways, I hope not. Yet in others, I wonder whether Stanley Kubrick wasn't part of the new advance guard, remorselessly moving towards the soul of a machine. Will *Eyes Wide Shut* have final answers? If it is true to its maker, and if he knew it was his last testament, it will have questions that will make us deeply uneasy.

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Soldiers recruited by violent far-right

BY ANDREW BUNCOMBE

THEY NUMBER probably no more than three dozen yet they are considered too dangerous and extreme for most of Britain's far right.

Combat 18, a collection of skinhead tattooed racists, remain influential beyond their size. Yesterday it was disclosed that membership had spread to include soldiers in some of Britain's elite regiments. Two soldiers were among more than a dozen individuals whose homes were raided after a year-long investigation into the activities of neo-Nazis.

The operation, co-ordinated by MI5, the Special Branch and military police, resulted in raids at up to 14 addresses, including properties in London, Humberside, South Wales, Lancashire and Merseyside.

Three people, arrested under the Public Order Act of 1986, which relates to stirring up racial hatred, have been bailed pending further investigations. None has been charged. "A number of warrants were executed to seek material including CDs and publications," said the Metropolitan Police.

It was reported that the soldiers whose homes were raided served with The Parachute Regiment and the King's Regiment. The first is said to be a private who did tours of duty in Northern Ireland and Bosnia; the second is a private serving in the North-west.

The investigation followed an internal inquiry by the Ministry of Defence, which last year identified 12 serving soldiers as supporters of the Combat 18 group. The MoD refused to confirm details, saying: "Two individuals from different units are among those whose homes have been raided."

NO REMORSE



Combat 18 achieved notoriety for the racism and violence of its members. Apparently taking its name from the location in the alphabet of Adolf Hitler's initials, it was originally linked to the British National Party (BNP), providing "security" at its events. It broke away in the early Nineties after deciding the BNP leadership had become too "soft".

An insight into the organisation's perspective came last year, when the Combat 18 leader and founder, Paul "Charlie" Sargent, was jailed for life after he and a benchmark, Martin Cross, killed a fellow member during an internal feud. Chelmsford Crown Court was told by a pathologist that the 22cm stab wound to Christo-



The newsletter (left) of the No Remorse band, whose music C18 publishes. C18 members are shown (right) in a photo from the newsletter

pher Castle's heart and lungs would have required "considerable force". The court was also told that after the "execution" Cross referred to Mr Castle as a "casualty of war".

Since then Combat 18 has adopted a lower profile, happy to operate with a smaller membership than ever. "To some extent they have been ostracised by other members of the far right, who are fed up with their violence," said Nick Lowles, co-editor of *Searchlight*, the

anti-fascist magazine that first highlighted the presence of Combat 18 supporters in the British Army.

"They have accepted that they are not going to win society over but some are keen to go on to more extreme measures and try and imitate what has been happening in Northern Ireland. They are not a major organisation - they do not have many supporters but they have been arguing for a more violent strategy, including

terrorism." Links between the far right and loyalist paramilitaries in Northern Ireland stretch back to the early Seventies, though some observers say it has rarely been more than casual contact.

Combat 18 members regularly turn up at loyalist rallies and a number joined an Apprentice Boys of Londonderry march through Bolton in 1988. Mr Lowles said, however, that links between C18 and the UDA and the UVF loyalist

paramilitary groups had been strengthened recently. In October the man responsible for the links, a former soldier from Farnham, brought seven UVF members to Wigan for a C18 concert.

Such concerts and music sales are a lucrative source of income for C18, now headed by a former Royal Marines Territorial member from south-east London. The organisation publishes music by a range of racist skinhead groups includ-

ing No Remorse, Celtic Warrior and Razors Edge. The publishing business, operated - at least until recently - from South Wales, has provided the organisation with money to fund its newsletters and magazines such as *Strikeforce*.

C18 may have a hardcore membership of no more than 40 members, with up to 80 or 90 others who will be called on for "special events".

"It is always being written that they are heavily linked to football hooligans," an intelligence source said yesterday. "Of course there are some who get involved but it is exaggerated. The last time we saw a large number of them getting involved was when they disrupted the 1996 England versus Ireland match in Dublin."

C18 may have adopted a lower profile, though campaigners believe it is no less dangerous.

"There are a lot of people who believe they are preparing to do something quite serious," one said yesterday.

Balloon Britons ditch in Pacific

BY LINDSAY BARNES

THE EVEREST of aviation records remains intact. The attempt by two Britons to circumnavigate the world by hot-air balloon ended early yesterday with snow pouring over the capsule as it ditched into the Pacific Ocean 50 miles south-west of Tokyo.

Pilots Andy Elson and Colin Prescott were safe and well despite aborting their flight after successfully circumventing China. They have set an unofficial world flight endurance record of 17 days, 18 hours and 25 minutes.

Mr Elson, 45, of Wells, Somerset, and Mr Prescott, 48, of Stockbridge, Hampshire, had gone 12,200 miles - more than two thirds of their intended course around the globe - since leaving Almeria in southern Spain on 17 February.

In December, Richard Branson aborted his bid in bad weather after deviating from his prescribed course across China, leading to a Peking ban on British-registered balloons over their airspace. As a result Mr Elson and Mr Prescott were forced to track the south of China on a course slower and more complicated to navigate.

They were compelled to land after cloudy weather meant solar batteries that operated the kerene burners would run down. "We had to go up through the cloud to charge batteries and on the way up we accumulated an awful lot of snow and ice on the balloon," said Mr Elson.

Speaking by satellite from the Japanese Self Defence Forces base in Hamamatsu, Mr Prescott described how he screamed himself hoarse with instructions to Mr Elson, who sat on the roof of the capsule to guide them down. The two men were rescued after less than a minute in the water by a Japanese military helicopter.

"I don't think we have failed," Mr Elson said. "We have just found another way that doesn't work. Maybe one of the lessons is that, without the co-operation of the Chinese, it is not possible [to fly via] the northern hemisphere."

A WHO'S WHO OF NEO-NAZI GROUPS

In the UK
National Front (NF) - Best-known of UK fascist groups, the most prominent of far-right groups during the 1970s.

British National Party (BNP) - Founded 1992 by ex-NF leader John Tyndall. Its 600 members make it largest UK racist party.

National Democrats (ND) - The far right is riven by factionalism. After a decision to rename the NF the National Democrats in 1995 some members stayed loyal to the old name, others became the ND.

Combat 18 (C18) - The NF, ND, and BNP all share and have lost members to

C18, which favours violence and "terrorist" activities. Openly Nazi, the group encourages members to attack racial and sexual minorities.

Blood and Honour - Music-based non-membership organisation, aiming to unite Nazi skinheads in the UK and across Europe.

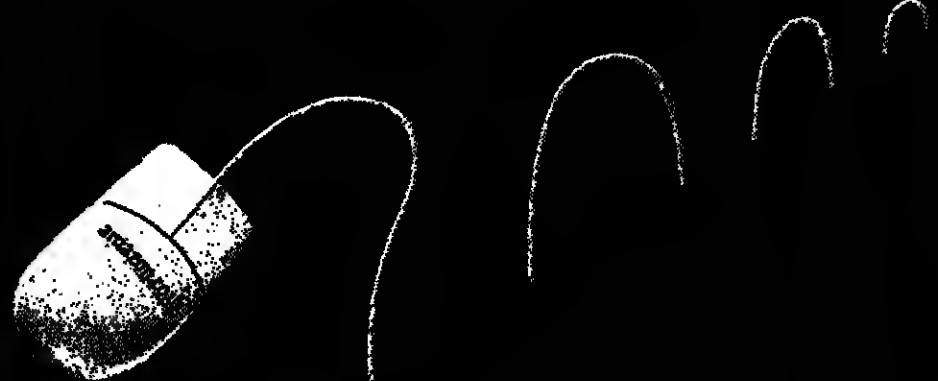
In Austria
Freedom Movement got 27 per cent of vote in 1996 European election, giving it six MEPs. Leader Joerg Haider has praised Hitler's employment policies.

In France
Splits have weakened Jean-Marie Le Pen's Front National as he desperately

clings to leadership of a party intent on modernising.

In Germany
From 1990 to 1993 a wave of fascist violence resulted in the death of 75 people as neo-Nazis exploited reunification. The Germans have also been embarrassed by links between neo-Nazis and the army.

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Balloon Britons ditch in Pacific

BY LINDA HARRIS

THE FURTEST of most people's dreams is to see the world from the air. But for two Britons, the dream was a reality when they ditched their balloons in the Pacific Ocean, 10 miles west of Tokyo.

Pilot Andy Elton and his wife, Jane, were seen by a Japanese fishing boat and rescued after a 12-hour ordeal. The pair were taken to a hospital in Tokyo, where they are recovering from their ordeal.

Mr Elton, 42, of Woking, Surrey, and Mrs Elton, 41, of Stockbridge, Hampshire, had been in the air for 12 hours when they ditched their balloons. They were seen by a Japanese fishing boat and rescued after a 12-hour ordeal.

They were taken to a hospital in Tokyo, where they are recovering from their ordeal. The pair were seen by a Japanese fishing boat and rescued after a 12-hour ordeal.

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GM row: Science minister with food business links met US corporation while playing role in biotechnology policy



The controversy over genetic modification caused a huge demand for organic food

Lord Sainsbury in Monsanto talks

LORD SAINSBURY, the science minister, with family business interests in genetically modified (GM) food, met senior officials from Monsanto, the American GM giant, while playing a key role in government discussions on biotechnology.

Lord Sainsbury of Turville held a confidential discussion with three Monsanto executives in his private office at the Department of Trade and Industry on 14 December, three weeks after he attended the first meeting of the Cabinet's Ministerial Group on Biotechnology and Genetic Modification - known as Misc 6.

His meeting with Monsanto, attended by civil servants, raises fresh concerns about the extent of his role in dealing with GM issues within government and the potential conflict with

his private business interests. The day after the Monsanto meeting, Lord Sainsbury chaired a government-sponsored biotechnology seminar with consumer associations, environmentalists such as Friends of the Earth, and one of the Monsanto officials he had met the day before.

John Redwood, the opposition spokesman on trade and industry, last night accused Lord Sainsbury of being misleading over his role in government discussions on GM issues and has called on him to resign.

"Lord Sainsbury has promised us that he has had nothing to do with GM food in government, so I don't see why he is having a meeting with

Monsanto on this particular date - the day before the 15 December meeting which he chaired," Mr Redwood said.

"Lord Sainsbury, who is a shareholder and investor in GM companies, had made it clear in some of his statements that because of that he has nothing to do with GM food issues in government," he said.

"We now learn he has had a meeting with Monsanto. So what I want to know from Lord Sainsbury is which story is he going to stick to?"

A statement from the DTI said: "Lord Sainsbury meets numerous companies and other non-governmental organisations in his capacity as Science minister. Last year he agreed to meet Monsanto, at their request, to discuss issues relating to research and de-

velopment in the biosciences." At the 14 December meeting, Lord Sainsbury met Ann Foster, Monsanto's director of public and government affairs in the UK, Hugh Grant, president of the company's agricultural division in St Louis, Missouri, and Robert Horsch, general manager of Agracetus, a GM research company owned by Monsanto.

Dr Horsch is one of Monsanto's leading scientists in genetically modified plants and is named on the company's patents controlling the use of herbicide-resistant crops.

Ms Foster said the meeting with Lord Sainsbury included a discussion on GM crops and food. "It's perfectly normal for companies, it's perfectly normal for interested parties to meet ministers," Ms Foster said.

Consumers rushing for organic food

THE CONTROVERSY over genetically modified food has led to an unprecedented surge in the sale of organic food, *The Independent* has found.

A survey of major retailers shows that two of the country's leading supermarkets - Tesco and Asda - recorded a 20 per cent increase in February sales, compared with January.

Tesco's organic food buyer, Andrew Sellick, said: "The upsurge was nothing short of phenomenal, and it is the awareness of the GM issue which has pushed the sales."

Sainsbury's organic sales were worth £6.7m last month, compared with £5.8m in January, a 15.5 per cent rise.

Marks & Spencer, a medium-sized food retailer, said its increase was "more than 100 per cent." Iceland, which has a small number of organic frozen foods, had a 42 per cent increase.

Organic vegetables, fruits and cereals are grown without pesticides or artificial fertilisers - natural methods such as crop rotation take their place - while livestock and poultry are raised without intensive farming techniques. All organic food is guaranteed non-genetically modified. Farmers must spend two years converting their land before it can be organically certified.

Organic carrots or apples do not look as perfect and regular as the products of large-scale agribusiness. Production techniques are also more laborious and the costs greater.

Seventy per cent of the organic food sold in Britain has to be imported. Less than one per cent of farmland here is organically managed, by fewer than 2,000 farmers. Germany, Austria, Sweden and Denmark are all aiming to have 10 per cent by next year.

Overall the market is growing at 40 per cent a year. Tesco, Britain's largest food retailer with more than 15 per cent of the UK grocery market, has more than 200 organic lines from potatoes to yoghurt.

The company sold £35m of organic food in the 12 months to 1 March, more than double the amount in the previous year. In the next 12 months Tesco says it will produce worth £100m.

UK sales of organic food as a whole have risen from under £100m annually in 1993 to £260m in 1997 and about £400m last year. The £1bn barrier could be broken next year, according to Simon Brenman, manager of producer services for the Soil Association, the principal organic food and farming pressure group.

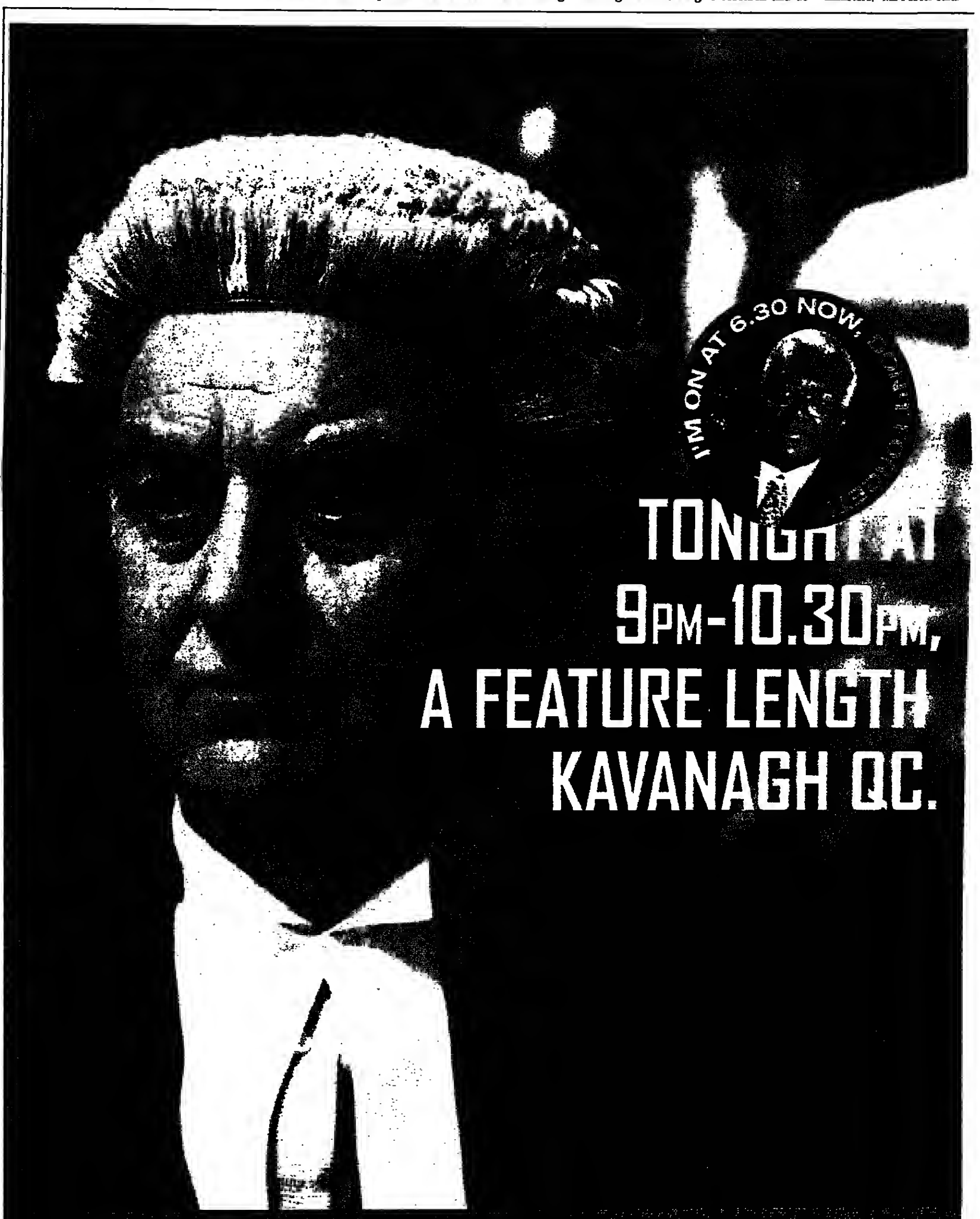
Senior food industry figures said February's remarkable extra sales surge was caused by the GM controversy.

One of the most striking instances of sales growth last month was in organic baby food. Baby Organic, Britain's only organic babyfood manufacturer, which supplies Tesco, Sainsbury, Safeway, Waitrose and Boots, had its best month in February: its sales were 24 per cent higher than the month before.

"I know this is down to the GM controversy," said the company's founder and managing director, Lizzie Vann.

"People feel they won't compromise with their babies. If a woman's pregnant and she's given up drinking and smoking, when she gets the baby she's not going to start fooling around with its food."

Calls to the company's free-phone helpline jumped from 300 a week at the start of February to 800 a week now.

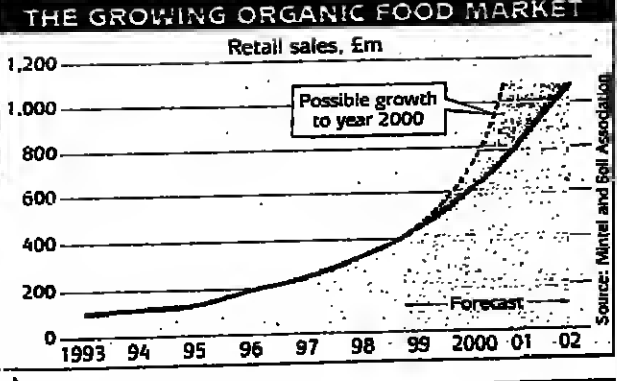


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Broadcaster has plastic surgery

THE BROADCASTER Sheena McDonald has had plastic surgery to her face after being knocked unconscious by a police van on an emergency call nine days ago.

A spokeswoman for University College Hospital, London, said yesterday: "She had plastic surgery to her face on Friday and recovered well from the anaesthetic. She remains in intensive care but her condition is stable and she is improving."

Ms McDonald, 44, received serious head injuries in the

BY TIM MOYNIHAN

accident in Islington, north London.

Police declined to comment yesterday on reports that the police van was travelling on the wrong side of the road. It was claimed that it pulled out and overtook a line of stationary cars queuing at a red traffic light.

A 27-year-old police constable has been suspended from driving duty since the incident and an investigation launched, as is routine.

COMIC RELIEF

Four generations murdered in their sleep as arson comes to the suburbs



BY KATHY MARES

THE MIDDLE-AGED woman stooped down and gently laid a bunch of white carnations in the front yard of what was, until 48 hours ago, a family home. Her husband looked up at the charred brickwork and the boarded-up windows, and shook his head in disbelief.

Friends and relatives were at a complete loss yesterday as to the motive behind an arson attack that killed four generations of the Day family – seven people in all – at their terraced house in Chingford, north-east London, early on Saturday.

"As far as I know, they didn't have an enemy in the world," said Chantelle Anderson, a family friend who had come to pay her respects. "There were no feuds or rows going on with them. I can't think of a reason why anyone would do something so terrible."

The victims – Sandra Day 51, her son Lee, 20, his four-year-old twin daughters, Madison and Rhianman, his two-year-old son, Rhys, Mrs Day's 75-year-old mother, Kathleen, and a 16-year-old believed to be Lee Day's girlfriend – all died of smoke inhalation.

Yesterday, as formal identifications were carried out and post-mortem examinations finished at East Ham mortuary in east London, detectives interviewed friends and relatives in an attempt to find possible reasons for the family being at-



Members of Red Watch at Chingford fire station yesterday taking flowers to lay at the house where seven died. Above left, friends leave the scene. Jack Hill, Tom Craig

tacked. The seven deaths are being treated as murder.

At Highams Park Baptist Church, a few hundred yards from the house, prayers were said for the victims yesterday. The minister, the Rev Hugh Doyle, said after the morning service that his congregation was stunned by the deaths.

"There is a deep sense of anger and incomprehension that something like this could happen, especially around here," he said. "It is a very quiet community, a very safe

community." Mr Doyle, who is planning a special service of reflection and prayer with other churches next Sunday, said: "It is as if a terrorist attack has been carried out on a shop. It has produced the same massive loss of life."

Police believe petrol was probably poured through the letter-box of the three-storey house, where the family had lived for more than 10 years. A red plastic petrol canister has been removed from the scene. The fire, which swept

through the house at about 1am on Saturday, destroying the roof and most of the internal floors, was described by police as "a horrific attack on innocents". They are planning a second forensic search today.

Mrs Day's husband, Brian, 52, was the sole survivor. He managed to clamber down a ladder placed against a first-floor bedroom window by neighbours and was treated at Whipps Cross Hospital for burns to his hands. The three children, who

were trapped inside with the other adults, lived with Lee Day's separated wife, according to friends, but often spent weekends with their father.

The alarm was raised by the family's next-door neighbour, Lisa Lewis, who was woken by the sound of screaming. She called the fire brigade and alerted another neighbour, a window cleaner, who took his ladders to the house.

Miss Lewis, 25, said: "It was terrible. I could hear the kids coughing and crying, but there

was nothing I could do. There was no way anyone could get in there." With flames roaring from the roof and windows, neighbours tried in vain to kick down the front door. Miss Lewis said that the children's mother then arrived and she heard her scream "Get my babies! Get my babies!". She collapsed and was taken to hospital.

There was a steady stream of visitors yesterday to the end-of-terrace house in Bellamy Road, a cul-de-sac on a 1970s council estate. "They were a lovely family, all of them," said one woman, her face contorted with grief. "I just can't believe that this has happened."

Neighbours, still stunned, stood in their front gardens, surveying the scene. Two teenage girls clung to each other in the rain, weeping. Visitors added to the growing pile of flowers; some left teddy bears in memory of the children who died. "You will always be remembered," read the note on one bouquet. "Seven angels taken from us to heaven."

Bristol heart doctors to testify

BY ALLAN SMITH

THREE DOCTORS shamed in the Bristol heart babies scandal will give evidence to the £10m public inquiry opening shortly.

The surgeons James Wisheart and Janardan Dhasmana and Dr John Roylance, former chief executive of the United Bristol Healthcare NHS Trust, were found guilty of serious professional misconduct by a General Medical Council inquiry. It investigated the higher-than-average death toll of babies having complex heart surgery at Bristol Royal Infirmary.

All three have been asked to give written witness statements to the inquiry ordered by Frank Dobson, the Health Secretary, and due to open with public hearings in Bristol on 16 March. The four-strong panel will be chaired by Professor Ian Kennedy, a medical legal expert. Dr Steve Bolsin, an anaesthetist in the surgical team, whose concerns led to the GMC inquiry, will also appear.

The inquiry will hold public hearings in Bristol before moving to London. The hearings are expected to last into the summer of 2000.

Parents who lost children having heart surgery at the hospital in the 11 years to 1995 will be the first witnesses. The inquiry chairman has warned they face a "gruelling" time as they recount their experiences.

The inquiry will also investigate the retention of hearts and other organs – without parental knowledge or consent – of babies who died with complex heart conditions.

About 2,000 operations are being examined.

The GMC inquiry ordered that Mr Wisheart and Dr Roylance be struck off, and banned Mr Dhasmana from operating on children for three years, although he was allowed to continue with adult cases.

It investigated 53 operations done by the two surgeons. Twenty-nine patients died and four were left with severe brain injuries.

Nearly 600,000 pages of evidence have been scanned into computers for the inquiry.

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Emergency mission ready to repair Hubble trouble

BY STEVE CONNOR
Science Editor

AN EMERGENCY mission is to be sent to repair the Hubble space telescope, which is in danger of shutting down suddenly because of a wobble.

Scientists at the American National Aeronautics and Space Administration (Nasa) have found that gyroscopes on the telescope, which normally provide its highly sensitive sense of balance, are faulty.

Only three of the Hubble's six gyros are working correctly and, if one more should fail, the instrument's flight computer would shut down the telescope, leading to the first important fault since the discovery of a defective mirror soon after it was launched in 1990.

Nasa is trying to reorganise the launch schedule of its space shuttles to repair the Hubble.



Only three of Hubble's six gyros are working correctly

Losing one of its star performers would be a public relations disaster.

Dan Goldin, Nasa's administrator, has told the United States Congress that a "rapid-response" mission to repair the Hubble in October is being considered.

"What we're concerned about is losing the scientific

data stream for a year or so," Dr Goldin said. A scheduled repair mission due to be launched next year could be brought forward to replace the defective gyro, he said.

John Campbell, associate director for Hubble at Nasa's Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Maryland, said: "It wasn't very smart to wait for

more than a year and we began working then with the shuttle folks to see if there wasn't a way to get there earlier."

Since the Hubble was launched it has provided breathtaking images of distant cosmological phenomena, such as the birth and death of stars, exploding nebulae, and pictures of the oldest galaxies created soon after the Big Bang.

Because the telescope orbits above the Earth's atmosphere, it can take clearer images of objects that can barely be seen even with highest-powered terrestrial telescopes.

However, the clarity depends on the telescope being able to keep its position with incredible accuracy, equivalent to holding a beam of light on a coin on Earth. Repairing the six gyros will ensure the Hubble continues to be able to focus on the faintest of distant objects.

IN BRIEF

Man, 18, accused of knife murder

A MAN of 18 was charged yesterday with the knife murder of Justin Martin, 24, who died in hospital after an attack in Northampton on Saturday. A woman aged 18 and a man aged 19, also from Northampton, have been charged with assisting an offender. A 17-year-old youth and two girls aged 15 and 16 were released without charge.

One in three want to work abroad

ONE IN three Britons would like to work abroad, with America, Australia and Spain the most popular countries, according to a new guide. However, people should be aware of the different cultures, the Royal Mail's global job guide warns. Australian employers are very direct but in China or Eastern Europe they try to avoid confrontation.

Youth in Lawrence case freed

A YOUTH of 18 has been arrested and questioned about the paint attack on the memorial plaque to the murdered black teenager Stephen Lawrence in Editham, south-east London, a Scotland Yard spokeswoman said. The youth, said to be of mixed race and not known to the Lawrence family, was released pending further inquiries.

Three share £8.3m jackpot

THREE WINNERS shared Saturday's £8.3m National Lottery jackpot, each scooping £2,773,403, said Camelot. The numbers were 8, 37, 43, 32, 47, 53, bonus 45.

New E.coli case is suspected

BY MARIA BRESLIN

ANOTHER PERSON was admitted to hospital on Saturday night with suspected E coli food poisoning, health officials said.

There have been 20 confirmed cases in west Cumbria of patients affected by the potentially deadly O157 strain. Another 11 people with symptoms are awaiting test results.

The North Cumbria Health Authority could not say whether the worst was over, as the infection has an incubation period of up to two weeks.

At West Cumberland Hospital in Whitehaven eight adults were being treated in an isolation unit, and three children were in individual rooms. "With the exception of one elderly gentleman who has been described as 'poorly', all the other adults and children

are stable and are progressing well," said a health authority spokesman. "The three children at the Royal Victoria Infirmary in Newcastle continue to receive kidney treatment but doctors are optimistic all three will make a full recovery." All the patients are believed to be from the Cockerham and Brigham area.

The infection has been linked to a dairy in the area. Health officials are confident they found the source of the infection as quickly as possible. They believe there was a fault with a pasteurising unit, resulting in families drinking "raw" milk. They seized milk for analysis and served the farmer with a prohibition notice.

هكذا من الاعلى

Unionists split over IRA arms

THE TWO most senior figures in the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) divided on the issue of IRA arms decommissioning yesterday, with the party leader, David Trimble, predicting it would happen while his deputy said it would not.

The difference of opinion came as Mr Trimble and his deputy, John Taylor MP, prepared for a meeting on the subject this week with Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness of Sinn Féin.

The divergence in analysis raises questions of whether the UUP is working to a firm strategy as it moves towards the important psychological deadline of 2 April, the first anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement.

Although many political meetings are taking place in addition to the planned Trimble-Adams encounter, there is no sense of imminent breakthrough in the long-running decommissioning dispute. The general assumption is that the make-or-break negotiation will take place in the last week of March, after the return of party leaders from St Patrick's Day events in Washington.

Despite this likely timetable, Seamus Mallon of the nationalist Social Democratic and Labour Party appealed for an injection of momentum into the process, telling BBC's *Breakfast With Frost* programme: "I don't think people realise how

into a close relationship which ended some time ago. As far as my wife and I are concerned this matter is now finished."

The particular political significance of this lies in the fact that in June Mr Nicholson will be seeking re-election as one of Northern Ireland's three European MPs. In doing so he will be standing against the Democratic Unionist Party leader, the Rev Ian Paisley, who always tops European polls.

The party's anxiety is that some of its traditionally conservative supporters will desert Mr Nicholson, thus boosting Mr Paisley's showing.



Monica Lewinsky arriving at Heathrow airport yesterday for her book tour

Tim Ockendon/PA

Lewinsky flies in to plug book

BY ANDREW BUNCOMBE

MONICA LEWINSKY arrived in Britain last night to promote her authorised biography, which details her affair with President Bill Clinton.

Amid a scrum of photographers at Heathrow airport, Miss Lewinsky was accompanied by several minders. She starts her promotional tour today with a book signing session at Harrods.

The book, *Monica's Story*, has been written by the British former journalist Andrew Morton, who was also the biographer of Diana, Princess of Wales. The initial print run is 100,000 - unheard of for a hardback.

In an interview with *Time* magazine Miss Lewinsky said she hoped the book would sell well.

"I'm going to be criticised for saying this," she said, "but I want my book to do well. I need to have the means to take care of myself for the next few years. Therapy is not cheap."

Air rage victim sues tour firm

BY LINDSAY BARNES

A FLIGHT attendant who was allegedly attacked by a passenger plans to sue the holiday company she worked for at the time.

Fiona Weir, 32, allegedly had a vodka bottle smashed over her head as she tried to deal with a passenger. The incident happened last October on an Airtours International flight to Malaga, Spain.

In a statement released yesterday her solicitor, Iain Jenkins, said: "Fiona did not feel that her future lay with Airtours and was disappointed with some of the elements of their handling of her case. 'We are currently preparing a legal case against Airtours.'

The stewardess, from Wim-

bledon, south-west London, has since begun a new job with the airline Flying Colours.

Mr Jenkins of solicitors Lee and Priestley, based in Leeds, added: "She is busy trying to rebuild her life after the terrible trauma she has endured."

A spokeswoman for Airtours said yesterday: "We are pleased to see Fiona has sufficiently recovered to resume her flying career. We will do all we can to bring the matter to a satisfactory conclusion."

A 37-year-old British man has been charged and bailed by Spanish authorities in connection with the incident.

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on ready trouble

E.coli case suspected

الطريق الى...

Toxic dumps: official inquiry ordered



Diane Tomkinson and daughter Bethany at the toxic dump near their home

MINISTERS HAVE commissioned a study into reports that mothers living within two miles of toxic waste dumps are much more likely than normal to have babies with birth defects. Research has found the apparent link between the defects and landfill sites where toxic waste is buried. Other studies have backed it up. The health and environment departments called experts to a meeting last month and a two-year project is being set up to identify the extent of the problem.

Community campaign groups say their areas have suffered higher-than-expected numbers of ailments such as heart defects and gastrochisis. There are a child is born with intestines outside the body. They also complain of stomach upsets, asthma and sore throats. In some areas, groups say their lives are made a misery by flies and appalling smells.

There are 270 dumps licensed to bury toxic or "special" waste such as arsenic, cadmium or cyanide in the UK, and there are no rules to prevent them being sited near

By FRAN ABRAMS
Westminster Correspondent

houses. The new study will be done by the Small Area Health Statistics Unit at Imperial College, London, and will also look at the incidence of cancer near landfill sites.

Environmental campaigners and opposition MPs say Labour has failed to implement a pre-election promise to give the public full access to information on pollution.

Matthew Taylor, the Liberal Democrat environment spokesman, introduced a "Right to Know" Bill in Parliament last week. Although it has no chance of success, he hopes it will test the government's resolve.

Mike Childs, senior pollution campaigner for Friends of the Earth, said some community groups that raised the issue had not been taken seriously.

"It seems common sense that if you dump toxic waste in a hole in the ground then it's going to cause problems," he said. "Communities do not even have the right to know what



Matthew Taylor: Tabled a 'Right to Know' Bill

gastrochisis. A bigger study in the United States found a 12 per cent higher chance of major birth defects within a mile of a dump site. But other research done abroad has not supported the findings.

Further studies near two sites in the Rhondda by the University of Wales College of Medicine in Cardiff concluded more research was urgently needed. The college's team is now looking at whether women living near toxic landfill sites take longer to conceive.

A spokeswoman for the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions, which commissioned the new study with the Department of Health, said the London research could not be applied here because British landfill sites were better engineered. The high incidence of abnormality could have other causes, she suggested.

"The research didn't actually conclude there was any problem," she said. "It just said there might be. In Europe they do not have as much regulation as we do."

Nearby homes infested with flies all year

DIANE TOMKINSON lives a mile from the Peckfield landfill site in Micklefield, West Yorkshire. When her daughter Bethany was a year old she was diagnosed with a heart murmur. Bethany, now two and a half, does all the things other children do and the doctors hope her condition will right itself as she grows older. But she becomes breathless easily and her parents fear there may be a link between her illness and the nearby tip.

People in Micklefield have campaigned against the tip, saying it causes terrible smells and that their houses are full of flies, even in winter. They say the rubbish is piled so high it blocks the light from houses just yards away on the other side of a road.

"It's horrendous," Mrs Tomkinson said. "It was only quite recently that I heard on the news about these problems. You can never prove it, but it does make you wonder."

"I think in 10 or 15 years they will turn round and say they were wrong to put the tip there."

Mrs Tomkinson is expecting her second child in May, and so far there is no indication of any problem.

Kerry Huntley spent the last three months before the birth of her first child wondering

whether her daughter would survive.

Cleo was born with gastrochisis, which was highlighted by a scan, and her intestines and stomach were outside her abdomen when she was delivered by Caesarean section a month early.

"We couldn't plan anything. I felt like I had something growing inside me but I couldn't bond," said Mrs Huntley. "She was six weeks in hospital before she came home and even then she only weighed five or six pounds."

Fortunately for the Huntleys, an operation to correct the defect was successful and Cleo is now a healthy seven-year-old.

Three years after the birth they heard that an unusually high number of children born near the Nanty-Gwynedd landfill site near Tonypandy in the Rhondda Valley, South Wales, had similar problems.

Although there is no proof that Cleo's ailment was caused by the site, just a quarter of a mile from the Huntleys' home, they suspect there might be a link.

Families in the area have complained that the smell from the site makes them nauseous, and they are campaigning for the tip to be closed.

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8/P

B China denies US nuclear 'spy' claim

THE STRAINED relations between the United States and China looked likely to deteriorate after US claims that China developed a miniaturised nuclear warhead from technology stolen from a secret American nuclear laboratory.

BY MARY DEJEVSKY
in Washington

most advanced nuclear warhead. The espionage was detected, according to the newspaper, only after the CIA analysed results of China's nuclear tests a decade later and found disturbing similarities.

The paper said that a suspect had been identified in 1996 and given a lie detector test last month, which he failed. But he was not arrested. According to yesterday's *Washington Post*, he is a Taiwan-born American who has worked on classified weapons designs at Los Alamos for almost two decades.

The *New York Times* report suggests the Clinton administration kept the case quiet so as not to derail Washington's objective of building a "strategic partnership" with Peking. Yesterday, the US National Security Adviser, Sandy Berger,

acknowledged "a serious security problem" at the national nuclear laboratories dating from the mid-Eighties and admitted that the administration was too slow to address it. David Leavy, spokesman for the security council, said an investigation was in progress "to determine if there was criminal conduct and we continue to assess the implications for national security".

The Energy Secretary, Bill Richardson - whose department is responsible for Los Alamos - said that "major reforms were instituted in October 1998, a month after I came in" to the post. This was, in fact, eight months after Mr Clinton had ordered tighter security at the laboratories.

Experts were divided yesterday about the import of the latest *New York Times* claims. While some described the apparent theft of the W-88 tech-

nology as a blow to US security, others saw purely political interests in play at a time when suspicions between the US and China are mounting. Issues such as human rights and Taiwan are back on the agenda, and a visit to China last week by the US Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, brought on new detente. China has been incensed over the possibility that the US could extend a nuclear "shield" to Taiwan.

Peking protested yesterday that the spying charges were groundless and politically motivated. The Foreign Minister, Tang Jiaxuan, described the *New York Times* report as irresponsible and without basis. "There are some people," he said, "who want to stop the United States from exporting normal high-technology products to China. I think that this will not be beneficial to the interests of the United States."



'Compassionate conservative' George W Bush arriving at the Second Baptist Church in Houston yesterday AP

Bush team set for tilt at White House

GEORGE W. BUSH, by far the most likely Republican candidate for the White House in next year's election, was due to unveil the team that will spearhead his political preparations yesterday.

Mr Bush had confirmed last week that he would form a Presidential Exploratory Committee. If he wins the Republican nomination then he will probably face Al Gore, the Vice-President and most likely Democratic candidate, in 2000.

Mr Bush, 53, is sometimes referred to as just "Dubya" to distinguish him from his father, the former president. He has become known as a highly successful Governor of Texas who was re-elected by a landslide last year. He calls himself a "compassionate conservative" to distinguish himself from the party's ideological right wing.

The evidence from his selection of advisers is that he is actively courting just about every possible constituency in America.

J.C. Watts, the only black Republican in Congress, was expected to be on the team. So was Henry Bonilla, the first Republican Hispanic to be elected to Congress from Texas.

Jennifer Dunn, a Republican of Washington state, was the first woman of either party to run for Majority Leader in the House of Representatives and was vice-chair of the House Republican Conference.

There is a Mid-Westerner.

BY ANDREW MARSHALL
in Austin

Michigan Governor John Engler, and a Southerner, Republican Senator Paul Coverdale from Georgia.

Mr Bush spent much of the weekend speaking to the Second Baptist Church in Houston, Texas's largest church and one of the biggest in the country. Securing the support of the religious right will be crucial. He has also been assisted by Ralph Reed, the highly influential former executive director of the Christian Coalition, in making connections in North Carolina. That is the home state of Elizabeth Dole, Mr Bush's chief opponent for the Republican candidacy. Mr Bush's staff appointments, too, have been highly professional and are clearly well thought-out. They leave little doubt either that he will run, or that his strategy will be to try to swing the whole party behind him.

Maria Cino, who ran the National Republican Congressional Committee when the Republicans captured control of the Congress in 1994, will be his political director. His chief strategist in Austin is Karl Rove, a Republican operative who was behind Mr Bush's landslide victory last year. His chief fund-raiser will be Don Evans, a Texan businessman who is charged with the task of raising \$25m (£15.6m) for the candidate in short order.

Judge hands out pop punishment

HE IS a hard man, is Judge Paul Sacco. You would not want to get caught playing music too loud in the Colorado town he calls home, because the judge might get mad. And when he gets mad, he gets even.

Judge Sacco makes noise of offenders attend moothy sessions to play them some music of his own, and it is not music that a teenage tearaway wants to hear. There is "I'm going to leave Old Durham town", by the bearded English folkster Roger Whittaker, for instance, and "Tie a Yellow Ribbon Round the Old Oak Tree" by the 70s combo

BY ANDREW MARSHALL

Tony Orlando and Dawn. For the real hardcore offenders, there are bagpipes.

It is aimed at youngsters who cruise the street with their car stereos at full blast. The treatment works, it appears. "I'm not going to jam no more," said David Mascarenas, 17. "I took my stereo out altogether. I don't want to be hassled no more."

The judge's own composition, "I'm Sleeping in My Car", is in there, as are Dean Martin, Henry Mancini and John Denver. It does not sound like fun.

HUGH O'SHAUGHNESSY

Stopping money laundering is part of a misguided, unwinnable war on drugs

IN THE MONDAY REVIEW PAGE 4

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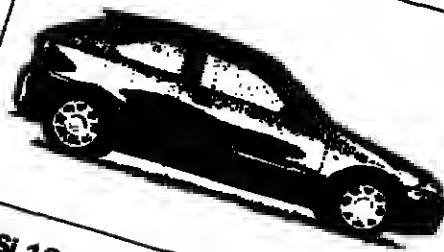
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Old colonial rivals aim for new co-operation

A BRITISH Foreign Secretary and a French Foreign Minister will this week host in Abidjan an unprecedented meeting of envoys from the two countries, in a symbolic gesture designed to show that a new era of co-operation is replacing the long historical rivalry between Africa's two dominant former colonial powers.

About 10 ambassadors from each side, posted in countries all over sub-Saharan Africa,

are expected to attend the Ivory Coast conference on Thursday. It will be hosted by Robin Cook and his counterpart Hubert Vedrine, and will be the climax of a joint mission by the two men to Ghana and then Ivory Coast, former British and French colonies in West Africa, during which they will meet the respective leaders, Flight Lieu-

tenant Jerry Rawlings and Henri Bédie. The initiative flows from last December's Anglo-French summit in St Malo, France, where Jacques Chirac and Tony Blair laid the foundation of what they intend to be a specifically European foreign policy and defence identity. It will be built around co-operation between the EU's two most influential global powers, who are the only European

nations with nuclear weapons. It could lead to greater aid from the EU to Africa, and greater co-operation at individual embassies in African countries where either Britain or France is not represented - even to the point of joint embassies in some countries. The initiative meshes with efforts to boost links between the Commonwealth and la Francophonie, the association of French-speaking countries,

mostly former French colonies, scattered around the world. Both countries also hope trade benefits will flow along the lines of a recent £130m contract won by the British TCI group for port development in Ivory Coast, traditionally the fiefdom of French companies. Before teaming up with Mr Vedrine in Ghana, Mr Cook will spend two days in Nigeria, where he will meet Nigeria's president-elect, Olusegun

Obasanjo and Tejan Kabbah, the elected President of Sierra Leone who is being kept in power only by the Nigerian-led Ecomog force. The Foreign Secretary will be assuring Nigeria that the return of civilian rule will mean greater Western financial assistance, and easing of sanctions. In the case of Sierra Leone, source of so much embarrassment to Mr Cook over the past

12 months, he will be desperate to ensure that Ecomog, the one barrier against the savage Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels, does not pull out too quickly. British officials do not hide how much is riding on a successful transition to democracy by Nigeria. "If Nigeria can get it right, the rising water will lift all boats in the region. If it goes wrong then the whole continent will suffer," said one.

Nigeria's president-elect, Olusegun Obasanjo

Britain and US lose 'true Gulf ally'

BY ROBERT FISK
Middle East Correspondent

FIRST KING Hussein of Jordan, then the Emir of Bahrain. Only 10 weeks into 1999 and the Grim Reaper is moving at speed through the Middle East (Abdullah Ocalan could yet join his guests, but we must wait).

Sheikh Issa bin Salman al-Khalifa of Bahrain died of a heart attack at 65 on Saturday, five minutes after a meeting with US Defense Secretary William Cohen - and the parallels with the late Plucky Little King of Jordan were breathtaking.

A friend of the West, a "true ally of Britain" - this from the BBC - a "very great friend... a warm, generous spirit with a light in his eyes" - this from Mr Cohen who had minutes earlier persuaded the Emir to buy a further \$5.5m of air-to-air missiles (profits to Hughes and Raytheon Co, USA).

The Sheikh was buried within hours, his body wrapped in a cotton shroud and 10,000 mourners weeping as he was interred at the royal cemetery in Riffa.

His successor? For King Abdullah the Second of Jordan, military commander, Sandhurst cadet and US graduate, read the Emir Hamad of Bahrain, military commander, Sandhurst cadet (after the Mons Officer Cadet School, Aldershot) and US graduate (US Army Command and Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas).

Sheikh Hamad used to send



Sheikh al-Khalifa: Died of a heart attack, aged 65

in the armoured cars against Shia rioters in Bahrain, those who demanded a restoration of the democratic parliament that the late Sheikh Issa dissolved in 1975, suspending the constitution for good measure at the same time.

Sheikh Issa regarded Britain as an old friend - so much so he used Britain as a dumping ground for his political prisoners - and thought so highly of our constabulary he appointed the sinister ex-Special Branch man Ian Henderson - a true Scot, who earned his colours "fighting" the Mau Mau in Kenya - as his head of security (Henderson's torture chambers have entertained many a Bahraini Shia opponent).

And the Royal Navy was always welcome. The US Fifth Fleet was even more welcome: it was, after all, headquartered



King Abdullah of Jordan (left) offered condolences to Bahrain's new Emir, Sheikh Hamad

Hasan Jamali/AP

in Bahrain. Indeed, the security pact between Bahrain and Washington became one of the linch-pins of Bahrain's security as its American and British allies repeatedly warned the fun-loving Emir of the dangers of Iranian "fundamentalism" and then of aggression from Iraq (the Emir's - and our - old friend when Saddam was invading Iran).

US pilots and our very own RAF boys took off from the pseudo-secret air base in southern Bahrain to bomb the Iraqis in 1991. And for this, we were very grateful. The late

Emir was not a wicked man. He rarely employed capital punishment, he had a sense of humour and enjoyed Western company - especially the female flight attendants who sunned themselves on the Sheikh's personal beach from which ordinary Bahrainis were banned.

When it was obvious that Bahrain's oil reserves would run out within 10 years, he shrewdly created a new Gulf free banking zone and trade sector, marred only by the violence that took 40 lives since 1994, provoked by the lack of

democracy on Bahrain's 265 square miles of 35 tiny islands. In its jail languishes today Sheikh Abdul Amir al-Jamri (on trial for spying and incitement), whose son Mansour yesterday paid his condolences to the new Emir Hamad in the hope that he would "open a new page of reconciliation with the Bahraini opposition".

Perhaps he will. But Hamad has promised a continuation of his father's policies and is a tough guy when it comes to putting down dissent. As for the Americans, they will, of course, back the Emir Hamad. His fa-

ther, Mr Cohen said, had given "steady support for the efforts of the United States to promote peace in the region".

Indeed he had. And while Washington has been plotting the overthrow of Saddam and demanding "democracy" for the Iraqi people, Mr Cohen said nothing about the lack of democracy in Bahrain.

Nor about the rather less than democratic Kingdom of Saudi Arabia where he arrived at the weekend, another American ally whose king may soon be visited by the Grim Reaper. ■ In Baghdad, the official news-

paper of Iraq's ruling Baath Party, *al-Thawra*, said yesterday: "The cause of [the Emir's] death... was the harsh words he heard from the US Defense Secretary, William Cohen." The newspaper quoted anonymous sources in Cyprus as saying: "The Emir was very affected."

Another Iraqi newspaper, *Babil*, also noted the timing of the Emir's death. "We wonder, what did Cohen tell the late Emir so he caused the man a heart attack," said the paper.

It is owned by President Saddam's son, Qasbi. (AP) Obituary, Review, page 6

Khatami ventures out into Europe

BY PAUL BOMPARD
in Rome

WHEN MOHAMMED Khatami arrives in Rome tomorrow, he will be the first Iranian head of state to visit Western Europe since the 1979 revolution toppled the Shah and swept Ayatollah Khomeini to power.

During his three-day official visit, he will meet the Italian President, Oscar Luigi Scalfaro, and the Prime Minister, Massimo D'Alema, in an effort to establish a dialogue with the West. A meeting with the Pope is also scheduled.

Mr Khatami arrives in Italy, the European country most open to his regime, with his foreign minister, the minister for mines and metals, and the minister for energy, who is directly responsible for oil exports. A goal will be to pave the way for new trade agreements.

Italy imports much of its oil from Iran. Last year, Lamberto Dini was the first European foreign minister to visit Tehran, and the Italian state energy group ENI has just signed a contract with Iran to tap oil fields in the Persian Gulf.

But Mr Khatami's visit has prompted sharp criticism from some Italian MPs, union organisations and women's groups, and from representatives of the almost 500,000 Iranians living in Europe.

Nevertheless Mr Khatami's reception at the highest official level implies that the Italian government is willing to accept the recent reforms in Iran as genuine. Mr Dini said: "We must ensure that Khatami and his government are welcomed in the West, and make them feel we do not wish to isolate Iran."

Mr Khatami, in whose country a Catholic minority is tolerated, will meet the Pope on Thursday. A Vatican official said: "The Pope's policy has always been that dialogue is preferable to isolation."

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Refugee disaster at sea kills 40

BY PHIL DAVISON
in Miami

THEY WERE almost within sight of the Land of the Free, off the coast of Palm Beach, Florida, one of the wealthiest areas of America. They were 40-odd Haitians, fleeing the poorest country in the hemisphere, on two leaky wooden fishing boats sailing side-by-side.

Only three of those on board made it, plucked from the Atlantic by the US Coast Guard after both boats capsized. Rescuers gave up the search for the others early yesterday, saying they feared about 40 had drowned in what was the worst illegal immigrant disaster off Florida.

A Coast Guard spokesman said the immigrants had fled Haiti and had reached the Bahamas, where they worked illegally to earn at least \$1,500 to be smuggled to the US.

They were within 30 miles of Palm Beach when one of the boats sprang a leak on Saturday night. As the 18 refugees, who were a few hundred yards from the shore, tried to scramble on to the other boat, holding 25 people, it capsized. Some could not swim. Others clung to debris.

The crew of a freighter heard screams but could see no one. They called the Coast Guard, who used night vision goggles to locate the survivors clinging to an oil drum.

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	£50,000			1.75	1.40	1.76	2.25	1.80	2.27
	£10,000			1.25	1.00	1.26	1.75	1.40	1.76
High Interest Cheque Instant access.	£10,000			2.25	1.80	2.27	2.75	2.20	2.78
	£2,500			1.00	0.80	1.00	1.50	1.20	1.51
Current Extra Instant access.	£10,000			0.50	0.40	0.50	0.50	0.40	0.50
	£500			0.25	0.20	0.25	0.25	0.20	0.25
Savings Accounts: Interest paid annually									
High Interest Investment * 30 days notice.	£100,000			4.50	3.60	4.58	5.00	4.00	5.09
	£50,000			4.00	3.20	4.06	4.50	3.60	4.58
	£25,000			3.25	2.60	3.29	3.75	3.00	3.80
	£10,000			2.50	2.00	2.52	3.00	2.40	3.03
	£2,500			1.75	1.40	1.76	2.25	1.80	2.27
Summit 7 days notice.	£100,000			2.75	2.20	2.75	3.25	2.60	3.25
	£50,000			2.25	1.80	2.25	2.75	2.20	2.75
	£25,000			1.75	1.40	1.75	2.25	1.80	2.25
	£10,000			0.75	0.60	0.75	1.00	0.80	1.00
	£2,500			0.50	0.40	0.50	0.75	0.60	0.75
Demand Deposit Instant access.	£50,000			1.15	0.92	1.15	1.65	1.32	1.65
	£25,000			0.75	0.60	0.75	1.00	0.80	1.00
	£10,000			0.50	0.40	0.50	0.75	0.60	0.75
	£2,500			0.25	0.20	0.25	0.25	0.20	0.25
TESSA* Follow-up TESSA	£5,000			5.25	—	5.49	5.75	—	6.01
	£2,500			5.50	—	5.66	6.00	—	6.16
	£1,000			5.00	—	5.11	5.50	—	5.66
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Premier 55	£10,000			2.25	1.80	2.27	2.25	1.80	2.27
	£2,000			1.50	1.20	1.51	1.50	1.20	1.51
	£1			0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25

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German Greens castigate leaders

GERMANY'S GREENS confronted themselves yesterday with the question of whether they were ready for government, and answered with a resounding No.

At a weekend party conference, the delegates rounded on the only Green politician who had distinguished himself in government, heaped abuse on their coalition partners, the Social Democrats, and turned their backs on calls to reform the movement, whose rules date back to the days of flower power.

Joschka Fischer, the Foreign Minister who had urged the party to modernise its cumbersome decision-making process, was accused of plotting a putsch. In a resolution adopted by an overwhelming majority, the Social Democrats were attacked for their "provocative and extortionist behaviour" in the nuclear debate. Chancellor Gerhard Schröder's "indecisiveness" also came in for criticism, and his government was ordered to ban the reprocessing of nuclear waste and start phasing out nuclear power immediately.

The Greens' party conference came in the wake of a series of setbacks, culminating in the Red-Green coalition's unexpected defeat last month in regional elections in Hesse. Compared with their share of 12 per cent of the votes a year ago, the Greens are now scoring about 6 per cent. Their Environment Minister, Jürgen Trittin, has been humiliated by Mr Schröder's party after he had attempted to start phasing out nuclear energy faster than his coalition partners were prepared to move. As a result of the defeat at Hesse, Green proposals for reforming Germany's nationality law look likely to be watered down.

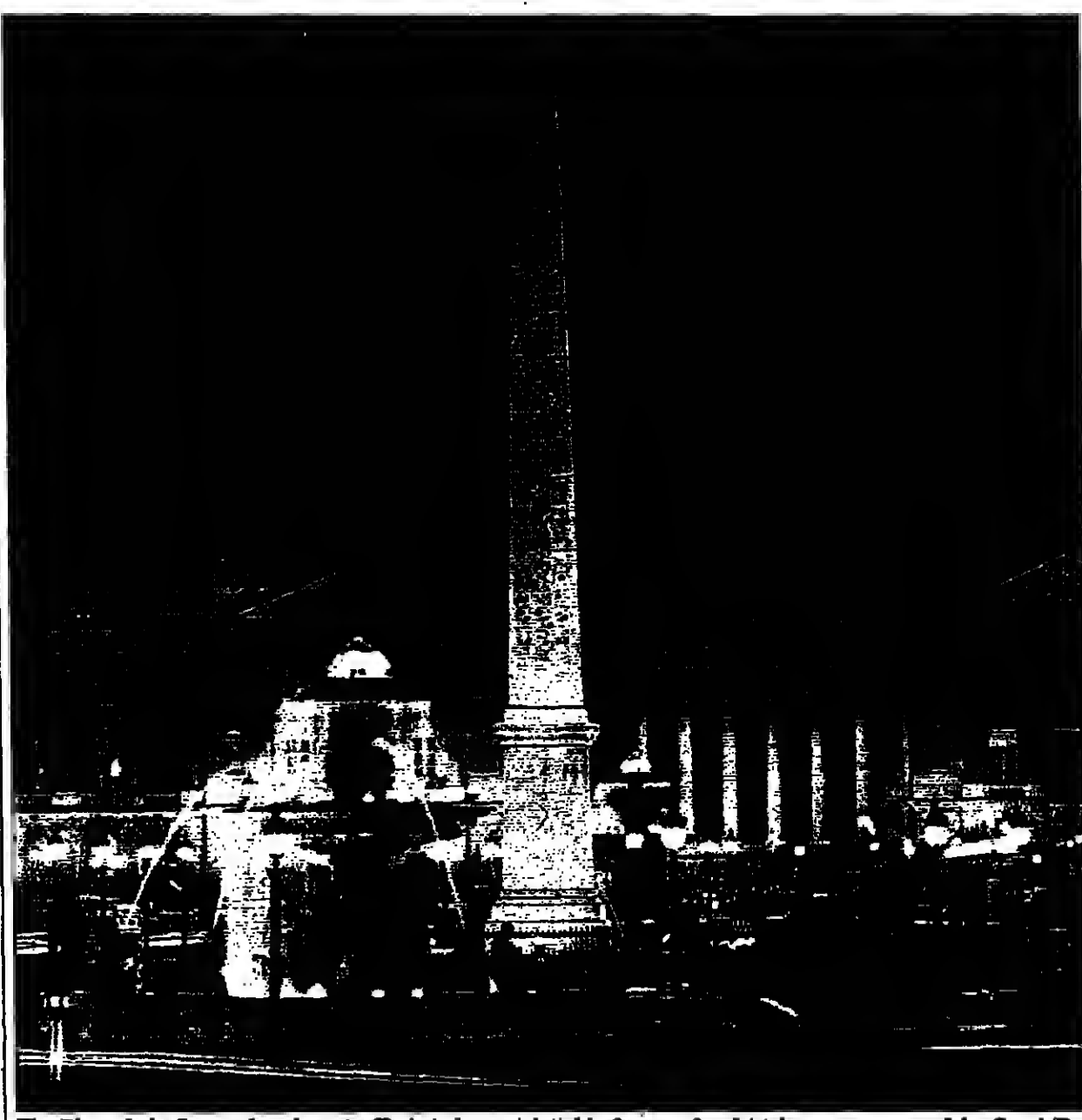
By IMRE KARACS
in Berlin

These reversals add up to a picture of the Green army in full retreat, but they are still refusing to concede that there might be something wrong with the strategy or the battle formation. The delegates had gone to their conference in Erfurt to prepare for the coming European elections, and not to hear criticism of their movement.

Only Mr Fischer, the Green politician with the highest popularity among voters, was prepared to suggest that the movement could do with some updating. He was heard out in icy silence. "We have to combine our visions with what is actually possible to achieve," Mr Fischer told the meeting. "We have to learn how to govern and how to go out and campaign."

As always, Mr Fischer thinks he knows the answers. The Social Democrats had been able to outflank him and his colleagues because Green ministers had no power to take decisions without going through tedious procedures for internal consultation. What the party needed, the Foreign Minister said, was clear leadership structures and less tokenism. Unlike other parties, the Greens have "spokespersons", rather than leaders, though no one really disputes Mr Fischer's role as *primus inter pares*.

His comrades nevertheless interpreted his intervention as an attempt to grab an undisputed leadership role. "This makes me absolutely mad," said parliamentary whip Kerstin Müller. "We all know that when the Greens talk of structural reform it's all about a battle for power," she said. Ms Müller received sustained applause for her contribution.



The Place de la Concorde, where traffic is to be restricted in favour of pedestrians

John Gooch/Reuters

Paris to curb cars in its most beautiful square

THE PLACE de la Concorde claims, with some reason, to be the most beautiful square in the world. For tourists and pedestrians it is a nightmare — an automotive Jacuzzi separating the Champs Elysées from the Tuileries gardens and the Louvre.

To reach the Egyptian obelisk in the centre, roughly marking the spot where Louis XVI, Marie Antoinette and Robespierre were executed, you have to run the gauntlet of acres of snarling, colour-blind traffic.

By JOHN LICHFIELD
in Paris

Now the old square is to undergo another revolution. The Mayor of Paris, Jean Tiberi, will present plans tomorrow to banish cars to two narrow lanes across the square and a loop around the northern side. Half the Place de la Concorde, at 17 acres one of the biggest squares in the world, would be reserved for pedestrians.

An even more radical plan, giving pedestrians 80 per cent

of the square, and banning all but buses, taxis and bicycles, will also be presented but this seems unlikely to be adopted. The Place de la Concorde carries more traffic at rush-hour than any other thoroughfare in the French capital: 10,000 cars an hour, which is more than the busiest section of the Boulevard Périphérique encircling the city.

The square is a vital link in the main east-west vehicle route on the right bank of Paris, connecting the Rue de Rivoli with the Champs

Elysées. Since it is jammed every morning and evening, how could it be closed, or even restricted, without reducing the city centre to permanent gridlock?

Officials at the Paris town hall say drivers would soon discover other routes. There would be a slight increase in existing jams, they say, but so what? The policy of the city is to reduce traffic by up to 10 per cent in the early years of the new century, and blocking part of the Concorde would help to encourage commuters to take the Métro or the bus.

Under the less radical of the two schemes, costing at about £15m, the square would gain seven or eight new large, grassy areas and an ugly car park on the Tuileries side would be abolished. Traffic would be restricted to narrow lanes heading north and south across the square to and from the river and to a loop around the northern side, connecting the Rue de Rivoli and the Champs Elysées.

Bloc-headed nations that are totally lost

CITY LIFE
TASHKENT

WE ARE late, lost, and getting angrier by the minute. We are, for at least the 10th time in the past half-hour, grilling a pedestrian for directions. Yet again, we are hearing an utterly different answer from the one given a moment ago by the previous person we stopped.

The taxi driver hasn't a clue. We turn up the heat on him. At least tell us, we say — witheringly — what part of the city we are in. Is this the east or the west? He looks uncomfortable, and gazes thoughtfully at the monotonous Soviet architecture around him before answering with the awkwardly pitched voice of a man on shaky ground. "Be west. Of course."

This is not a foreign correspondent's mean. It cuts to a far deeper issue, the extraordinary fact that a good number of the 270 million who live in the former Soviet Union, a territory that girdles nearly half the planet, have not a clue where they are. Not, at least, in terms of the compass. This one happened to ply the streets of Tashkent, capital of Uzbekistan. But the same disorientated man can be found in cabs from Minsk to Vladivostok.

West, north, south — concepts rooted in the core of a western brain — mean nothing. The poles are distant ice fields, which could be anywhere over the horizon. Alfred Hitchcock's famous movie title is just so much gibberish.

While an American cannot get into a car without being constantly reminded of his relationship as an individual against the backdrop of the planet by the street signs — the entire traffic grid works on compass points — a Russian or an Azeri usually has to use other means. He fumbles his way around by combining private landmarks — a twisted lamp-post here, a kiosk there, a memorable pothole — with an unshakeable (and often misplaced) faith in the ability of passers-by to help him out.

All this is particularly odd, given the passion for statistics and diagrams you often find among former peoples of the Soviet Union. There is no shortage of charts, showing you how things work. If you get bored during the seven days it takes to cross Russia on the Trans-Siberian Express, you can sit in the loo

studying the diagrams of the waterworks (not rocket science, this).

For decades, millions of Soviet males bought *Zo Rukom* car magazine so that they could study stark little drawings of the latest Lada chassis or Niva engine. Flights on Aeroflot carry helpful charts showing passengers where to find the axe. Computer manufacturers say Russian clients vacuum up every tiny detail of a desktop's performance statistics, which influence them far more than where the machine was made, and by whom. Broadcast weather forecasts are an endless Gregorian chant of statistics, from wind speed per metre to air pressure. Officials constantly spout statistics, trying to bring order to the chaos by attaching numbers to it.

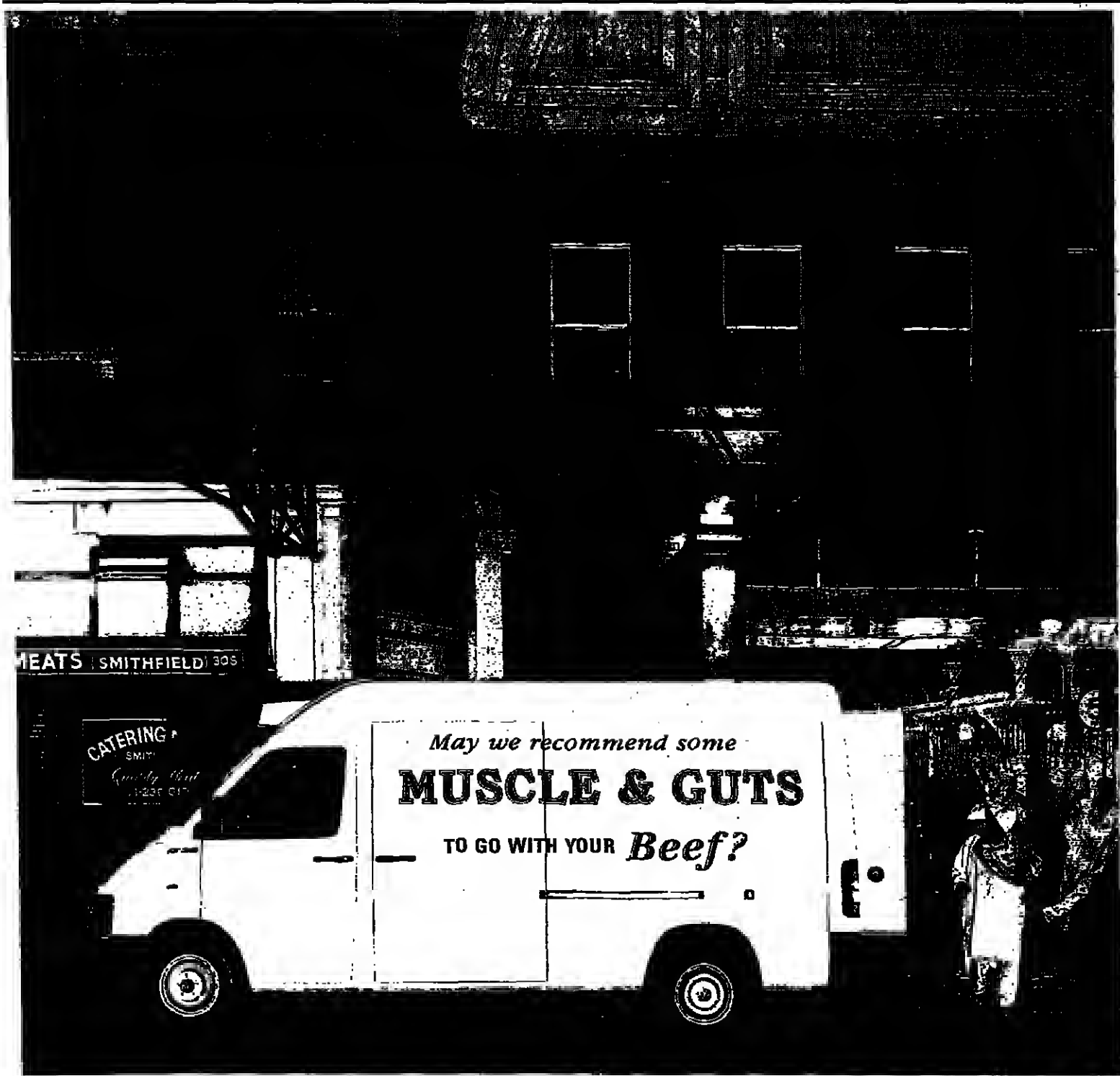
But cartography is a different issue. Hand a Russian a map and he will look at you with suspicion. I sought help from a man in Moscow, brandishing one under his nose. He refused to even glance at it; it was as if it was flourishing a warrant for his arrest.

The standard explanation for this has been trotted out many times: maps were banned by the Communists, because of paranoia that they would fall into hostile hands, and they have yet to catch on, not only because they are expensive but also because people have got used to life without them. Even now — seven years after the end of the USSR — they are a rarity outside capital cities.

But there are other reasons for their lack of use, and the general state of disorientation. In most main cities, the street names have changed in the past few years. At most, two out of 10 people own cars, so they are less likely to carry a broad mental picture of the lay-out of their surroundings. In much of Russia the issue is further complicated by the fact that the landscape is flat, and seems much the same whatever direction you look. It is as if the country is too vast for compass points to matter.

In Tashkent, we finally arrived at our destination. Blustering apologies, we asked our hosts where we were. Was this the west, like the man said? They looked surprised. It was, of course, the east.

PHIL REEVES



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52 من الامارات

BUSINESS

Eve of Budget: The UK gets a glowing report as DTI prepares to boost small business

'Skilful' Chancellor wins rave review from the IMF

BRIEFING

WTO meets on banana wars

AN URGENT MEETING of the World Trade Organisation's General Council will take place in Geneva today at the request of the European Union. The move follows a US decision last week to force importers of European products ranging from cashmere to pecorino cheese to post a bond worth 100 per cent of the value of their goods. It was the latest round in the banana wars, a row over access to European markets for bananas imported by the US company Chiquita from Latin America. The WTO has postponed a decision on the dispute until 12 April, and the EU argues that America must wait until then before imposing any sanctions.

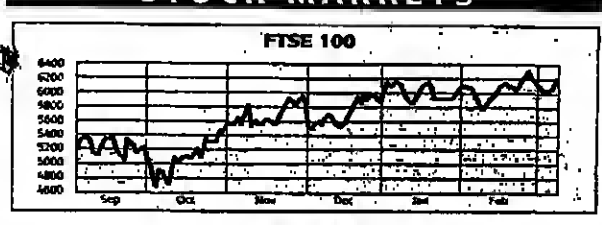
B&Q growth to create 2,500 jobs

B&Q, Britain's biggest DIY chain, is to create 2,500 jobs in the next year. It is announcing plans today to open 10 warehouse stores and three Supercentres, creating jobs from shopfloor to management. The plans will include its first warehouse in Northern Ireland, at Newry, while the planned new Supercentres will be opened in England in Cannock, Yeovil and Ashford. B&Q now has a total of 287 stores, with the latest, in Blackpool, opening last Friday.

Bid battle looms for French bank

A BID BATTLE is looming for Credit Commercial de France, France's fifth-largest bank. ING, the Dutch financial services giant, was close to securing agreement for a foreign bank's first foothold in France. However, ING has been outbid by Fortis, the Dutch/Belgian banking group, for the 7.8 per cent stake in CCF put up for sale by Mutuelles Le Mans. It is offering 112.5 euros a share, valuing the bank at 8 billion euros (£5.3bn). ING already has 9 per cent of CCF voting shares.

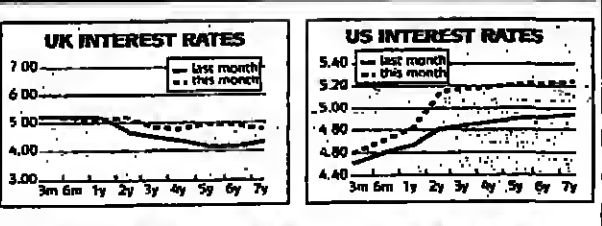
STOCK MARKETS



INDICES

Index	Close	High	Low	Chg	% Chg	52 wk high	52 wk low	Yield (%)
FTSE 100	6205.50	6340.00	6040.00	0.49	0.01	6319.8	4599.2	2.586
FTSE 250	3349.40	3400.00	3290.00	1.91	0.06	3570.9	2427.6	3.146
FTSE 350	2944.30	3070.00	2870.00	0.71	0.02	3210.4	2100.4	2.673
FTSE All Share	2846.04	2965.00	2765.00	0.73	0.03	2986.52	2143.33	2.719
FTSE SmallCap	2304.40	2410.00	2190.00	1.19	0.05	2793.8	1834.4	3.523
FTSE RealProd	1259.10	1350.00	1150.00	1.25	0.10	1517.1	1046.2	4.392
FTSE AIM	833.00	950.00	710.00	1.15	0.14	1146.9	761.3	1.124
FTSE Europe 100	2858.46	2940.00	2770.00	1.93	0.07	3079.27	2018.15	2.095
FTSE Europe 300	2741.28	2860.00	2620.00	1.59	0.06	3332.07	1860.63	1.964
FTSE Europe 500	2356.08	2480.00	2230.00	1.62	0.07	2947.97	1700.3	1.958
Dow Jones	14884.00	15245.00	14500.00	3.65	0.02	17352.35	12787.9	0.953
Nikkei	10241.12	10826.00	9800.00	3.88	0.04	11926.16	6544.79	3.42
Hang Seng	4839.09	5172.00	4480.00	1.48	0.03	6217.83	3833.71	1.793
Dax	1275.46	1370.00	1180.00	3.00	0.23	1283.91	923.32	1.248
Nasdaq	2339.27	2504.00	2170.00	2.20	0.09	2533.44	1357.09	0.283
Toronto 300	6415.40	6720.00	6100.00	1.63	0.03	7837.7	5320.9	1.65
Brazil Bovespa	9465.09	9543.00	9377.00	6.22	0.07	12339.14	4575.69	6.539
Chikun Beil	3346.17	3570.00	3120.00	0.47	0.01	3713.21	2629.72	2.121
Amsterdam Eax	529.54	560.00	490.00	1.32	0.25	600.65	366.59	1.943
France CAC 40	4189.56	4400.00	3980.00	2.36	0.06	4404.94	2981.21	1.863
Milan MB30	36367.00	37120.00	35700.00	3.74	0.01	39170	24175	1.123
Madrid Ibx 35	10005.00	10500.00	9500.00	7.70	0.08	10989.8	6869.9	1.744
Irish Overall	5389.05	5620.00	5150.00	1.00	0.02	5581.7	3732.57	1.523
S Korea Comp	538.19	560.00	510.00	3.49	0.67	651.95	277.37	0.269
Australia ASX	2902.50	3000.00	2800.00	0.79	0.03	2948.7	2386.7	3.179

INTEREST RATES



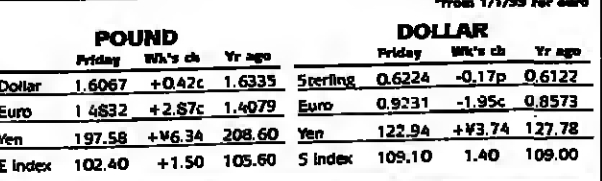
MONEY MARKET RATES

Index	3 month	6 month	1 year	Yr chg	10 year	Yr chg	Long bond	Yr chg
UK	5.49	5.29	5.48	-0.12	4.58	-1.45	5.60	-1.47
US	5.09	4.66	5.43	-0.38	5.31	93.93	5.60	0.47
Japan	0.18	-0.57	0.21	-0.49	1.63	-0.23	2.69	0.20
Germany	3.10	-0.41	3.13	-0.67	4.02	-1.01	4.98	-0.64

BOND YIELDS

Index	3 month	6 month	1 year	Yr chg	10 year	Yr chg	Long bond	Yr chg
UK	5.49	5.29	5.48	-0.12	4.58	-1.45	5.60	-1.47
US	5.09	4.66	5.43	-0.38	5.31	93.93	5.60	0.47
Japan	0.18	-0.57	0.21	-0.49	1.63	-0.23	2.69	0.20
Germany	3.10	-0.41	3.13	-0.67	4.02	-1.01	4.98	-0.64

CURRENCIES



OTHER INDICATORS

Index	Close	High	Low	Chg	% Chg	52 wk high	52 wk low	Yield (%)
FTSE 100	6205.50	6340.00	6040.00	0.49	0.01	6319.8	4599.2	2.586
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Australia ASX	2902.50	3000.00	2800.00	0.79	0.03	2948.7	2386.7	3.179

TOURIST RATES

Country	Rate	Country	Rate
Australia (\$)	2.4715	Mexican (nuevo peso)	14.54
Austria (schillings)	19.74	Netherlands (guilders)	3.1634
Belgium (francs)	58.03	New Zealand (\$)	2.9124
Canada (\$)	2.3667	Norway (kroner)	12.40
Cyprus (pounds)	0.8291	Portugal (escudos)	286.89
Denmark (kroner)	10.74	Saudi Arabia (rials)	5.8578
Finland (markka)	8.6137	Singapore (\$)	2.6554
France (francs)	9.4256	South Africa (rand)	9.5910
Germany (marks)	2.9407	Spain (pesetas)	238.73
Greece (drachmas)	463.96	Sweden (kronor)	12.92
Hong Kong (\$)	12.01	Switzerland (francs)	2.2974
India (rupees)	61.40	Thailand (bahts)	55.41
Israel (shekels)	6.0045	Turkey (liras)	553182
Italy (lira)	2794	USA (\$)	1.5625
Japan (yen)	192.68		
Malaysia (ringgits)	5.8584		
Malta (lira)	0.6137		

THE UK ECONOMY

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Real GDP	2.8	2.6	3.5	2.5	0.8
% change	2.8	2.9	2.8	2.6	2.5
Unemployment rate (claimant count, in percent)	8.0	7.3	5.5	4.7	5.0
PSBR	4.8	3.6	0.4	-0.3	0.8
Three-month interbank rate	6.7	6.0	6.9	6.5	-
10-year government bond yield	8.2	7.8	7.0	4.5	-
Trade balance, % of GDP	-1.6	-1.7	-1.6	-2.3	-2.9

THE UK ECONOMY

The British economy got a rave review from the International Monetary Fund yesterday. The IMF praised the Government for its "skilful management" and said prompt monetary and fiscal policy responses should ensure that the economic slowdown would be short-lived.

There was room for further interest-rate cuts, the IMF's annual health check concluded. The IMF forecasts that growth will slow to 0.8 per cent this year, slightly lower than its last published forecast, with the risk that it could be lower if world demand weakens again.

Apart from this caveat, Gordon Brown could not have asked for a more positive assessment on the eve of Tuesday's Budget. The IMF said: "The United Kingdom has significantly improved the architecture of macro-economic policymaking." It went on: "Executive Directors commended the authorities for the UK's impressive economic performance."

A Treasury statement welcomed the findings of the annual "Article IV" consultation. It said: "The Government is now addressing the fundamental structural weaknesses which have held Britain back for decades."

The IMF had special praise for the operational independence of the Bank of England and for the openness of its decisions. Britain had set an example other countries should follow, it said.

The fund welcomed the symmetric inflation target, which allowed the Bank to cut interest rates rapidly as growth slowed. "Monetary and fiscal policies are in a good position to ensure that the slowdown will be limited and of short duration."

The assessment said the Chancellor must stick to his plans to keep government borrowing low, saying his rules to limit current spending and keep the national debt at a sustainable level "did not impose clear enough limits on future policies". It urged him to go further in improving the transparency of fiscal policy, publishing more detail on public spending and on "tax expenditures" such as the new Working Families Tax Credit.

The summary also noted that some of the fund's board of directors were concerned that the national minimum wage could have an adverse effect on jobs.

However, it welcomed the broad thrust of the welfare-to-work measures introduced by the Government. Indeed, it recommended more of the same in order to shrink the poverty trap, although recognising that this would require extra public spending.

The IMF's forecast of growth of 0.8 per cent in 1999 is, as with other recent forecasts,

DTI to set up bureau for small firms

STEPHEN BYERS will announce the creation of a new bureau for small business at the Department of Trade and Industry, as one of a series of business-friendly measures to be unveiled on Wednesday.

Other steps expected to be announced by the Trade Secretary the day after the Budget include stronger takeover legislation to reduce political influence on merger decisions, a shake-up of the Training and Enterprise Councils and changes in bankruptcy law. There will also be a new consumer strategy to boost competition. Audits of prices charged by car dealers, supermarkets and high-street retailers will be published in the summer.

The small business bureau will borrow ideas from America's Small Business Administration. The Government is aware that smaller firms are worried about the amount of new rules and tax changes they have to implement from the minimum wage and working time directive to the Working Families Tax Credit.

The new body will help companies with up to 20 employees comply with changes imposed on them by government. It is also intended to act as an advocate for small firms within government, reflecting the DTI's concern that they have not always been heard in the past.

The concentration of government resources for small business into one agency should also help to ensure that they are used more efficiently.

Mr Byers will also make a series of announcements following on from the DTI's Competitiveness White Paper and the Budget's emphasis on encouraging enterprise. The aim will be to strengthen the competitiveness of the British economy, as well as overcome the alarm business organisations have begun to express about the burden of new red tape.

The moves will be welcomed by employers' organisations. Some of these, including the British Chambers of Commerce, have been advocating a small business administration for the UK for some time.

Yesterday Adair Turner, the director-general of the Confederation of British Industry, urged targeted assistance for smaller companies.

Mr Turner said the Budget should include measures that would boost their investment and spending on research and development.

In a television interview yesterday he said: "We would obviously be concerned if there were any increase in the burdens on business after a significant increase in some of the tax burdens and also administrative burdens over the last few years."

Southgate to quit EMI with £800,000 payoff

SIR COLIN SOUTHGATE, the controversial executive chairman of EMI, is to receive a payoff of about £800,000 following yesterday's announcement that he is to be replaced at the helm of the music group by Eric Nicoli, the chief executive of United Biscuits.

The surprise appointment of Mr Nicoli, a United Biscuits veteran with little experience of the music industry, ended EMI's five-month search for a new chief. At the end of last year Sir Colin told the group that he wanted to quit to focus on his job as chairman of London's crisis-torn Royal Opera House.

The company said yesterday Sir Colin would go at the end of July after 15 years with EMI, 10 of them in the top job. His contract runs until 2001, and sources said he would receive around £800,000 as compensation for loss of earnings.

Mr Nicoli, a non-executive director of EMI since 1993, is to receive a package of over £500,000 plus a one-off payment for losing his United Biscuits loyalty bonus. He will be replaced at United Biscuits by Leslie Van der Walde, chief executive of its McVie's subsidiary.

The 49-year old Mr Nicoli, who has headed the food company since 1991, was chosen ahead of several well-known music industry names, including Alain Levy, former head of Polygram.

Insiders said Mr Nicoli's inexperience of the music business would not be a drawback. "He hasn't been hired for his knowledge of the music industry. He has been hired for his managerial and leadership capabilities," one said. The appointment of an outsider would guarantee the independence of Ken Berry and Martin Bandier, the respected chiefs of EMI's records and music publishing divisions, he added.

Mr Nicoli's priorities will be to turn round EMI's share performance and mend his predecessor's rift with investors. Sir Colin had a mixed relationship with the City. His demerger of rental group Thorn and HMV in the early 1990s was credited with transforming EMI into a focused music business. However, more recently he was attacked for rebuffing a 600p-a-share £4.7bn takeover offer from Seagram of Canada. The rejection caused a collapse in EMI's share price.

Sir Colin also came under fire for the £12.5m payoff awarded to Jim Ffield who quit the group after being rejected as chief executive-designate.



Adair Turner: CBI chief urges more targeted aid

Clothing sales battle is set to intensify

BY NIGEL COPE Associate City Editor

BRITAIN'S clothing market is on the verge of a major shakeup as competition in the high street intensifies, a new survey claims today.

The study by Verdict, the retail consultants, says retailers in the saturated middle market will find the going increasingly tough as greater competition makes sales growth hard to achieve. But it reckons that Marks & Spencer, one of the biggest casualties of last year's retail slowdown, will be able to recover.

Verdict says the UK clothing market grew by just 1 per cent last year to £27bn, the lowest growth rate of the 1990s. Adjusting for the addition of new floor space, Verdict says comparable sales were actually down by 1.5 per cent, precipitated by the poor autumn.

According to Verdict, M&S saw its market share fall from 13.4 per cent to 12.2 per cent in the year. The biggest gains were made by Next, New Look and Aradida, whose formats include Dorothy Perkins and Principles.

However, the study says M&S will start to hit back at its rivals with a lower price policy. The biggest losers could be BHS, House of Fraser and C&A. Likely winners in the retail clothing race could include Oasis, Warehouse, Next, The Gap and Debenhams.

The report is upbeat on the prospects of a recovery at M&S. "M&S cannot be turned around overnight and 1999 will be a year of rebranding and returning to core values," it says. "The expanded floor space means that once the re-branding and price repositioning processes are complete, improved performance will flow through quickly."

Verdict says some retailers only had themselves to blame for poor sales last year, with bland, unexciting merchandise. This year should be better, with more colourful ranges apparent in this spring's collections.



After an unhappy Christmas, restless investors want Hamleys to play it tough

Ash under pressure to quit as Hamleys chief

BY FRANCESCO GUERRERA

HAMLEYS, the troubled toy retailer, is considering removing its chief executive Chris Ash within weeks, in a bid to quell investors' anger at the company's dismal performance.

Mr Ash is coming under growing pressure to resign to take responsibility for Hamleys' disappointing sales and underperforming share price.

Howard Dyer, the company's powerful chairman, is already sounding out potential replacements for Mr Ash, who was appointed to the top job in October 1997. The chief executive's chances of staying at the helm hinge on the final results, due to be announced later this month.

Insiders said yesterday that unless the figures showed signs of a turnaround in the trading performance at the company's flagship Regent Street store and Toystock mass market chain, Mr Ash was likely to be axed. "Chris is still there now, but the group hasn't been performing and needs to improve," a source said.

Hamleys' large shareholders, which include M&G, Prudential and Jupiter, are growing restless about the underperforming share price. "The institutions are on the phone to Howard telling him to do something about it," the source said.

The share price fell to an all-time low of 99p in October after the company revealed a near-50 per cent slump in first-half profits. The profit collapse was caused by an embarrassing information technology blunder that pushed Toystock into a loss. The Regent Street store was also hit by lower tourist spending.

Despite a slight recovery in the past few weeks, the stock, which closed at 131.5p on Friday, has underperformed the market by nearly 60 per cent in the past 12 months. At the time of the interim results, Mr Dyer said the profit shortage would not be made up in the second half, triggering a raft of earnings downgrades.

Hamleys further knocked investors' confidence in January when it reported disappointing sales at Toystock in the run-up to Christmas, traditionally its busiest period.

Analysts forecast a 1998 profit of £8m, down from £7.5m.

German giants hire abroad and cut at home

BY FRANCESCO GUERRERA

GERMANY'S BLUE-CHIP companies have sharply increased their numbers of overseas employees at the expense of domestic workers, an influential survey will reveal today, writes Francesco Guerrera.

The study by the German foreign investment specialist Urban Publishing will show that in the past 18 months staff employed by large German groups away from their home-land rose by 13.5 per cent to 1.9 million, but the troubles in the domestic economy and political uncertainties led to a 1.2 per cent drop in the number of German-based workers to 3.3 million.

The findings will reinforce the arguments of German firms which have threatened to move some of operations abroad in protest at the centre-left government's planned tax reforms.

A fortnight ago the insurance group Allianz warned that it could base its headquarters in another European country if the government increased the fiscal pressure on financial companies. Allianz is one of Germany's top 10 overseas employers with over 64,000 staff working abroad.

The insurer's threat was echoed by energy and industrial group RWE, which said it was reviewing the scope of its German-based investments.

The study, carried out among 263 large firms, found that Siemens, the industrial giant, is Germany's largest overseas employer with over half its 420,600 staff working abroad. In the past 18 months Siemens increased its overseas staff by more than 40,000 to 220,000, despite the planned closure of a microchip plant on Tyne-side with the likely loss of 1,000 jobs.

In the same period, Siemens's German workforce fell by 3,000 to 194,000.

Euro-sclerosis need not be catching

LAST WEEK, this column discussed the question of UK membership of EMU, and concluded there was no case for the Government to abandon its "wait and see" stance before the next election. This conclusion dismayed many of my pro-European friends, so I would like to reassure them that I have lost none of my enthusiasm for closer UK integration with the European Union, which looks as desirable as it is inevitable. Eventually, this will probably mean that Britain will become a full member of EMU.

But I just do not understand the case for rushing into this decision now. Integration needs to proceed further before we should give up monetary sovereignty, since idiosyncratic shocks to the UK economy remain all too likely.

This week, however, I shall turn to an increasingly fashionable, but nevertheless dubious, argument for staying out indefinitely – which is that the UK would catch a dose of "Euro sclerosis" if it were to become a member of EMU. The pro-European, but anti-EMU, group led by David Owen seems to believe that this might be the case, and even the Prime Minister is clearly worried about the issue.

The main loophole he has left himself for staying outside EMU over the long term is that our continental European neighbours might not introduce sufficient market-friendly reforms in their economies, in which case they



GAVYN DAVIES

Would life for the UK really be so bad if we climbed into bed with a sclerotic EMU bloc?

might be plagued by low GDP growth and high unemployment forever.

So would the UK catch Euro-sclerosis if it joined EMU?

Probably the most crucial point to make is that most of the key areas of policy concerning labour and product market flexibility are subject to European Union rules already, and they would be (at least in theory) unaffected by EMU membership. On the face of it, it is difficult to think of any relevant policy area – certainly not labour market reform, product market flexibility, industrial policy, merger control or social security – which

would be affected one way or the other by joining EMU. A clear example of this is the implementation of the Social Chapter, which was undertaken voluntarily by the UK, and will in future operate in this country irrespective of membership of the single currency. Similarly, the minimum wage.

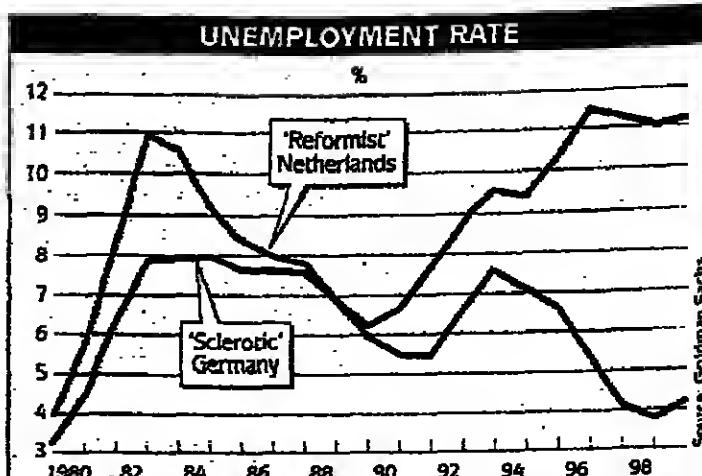
Euro-sceptics reply that this may be all very well in theory, but that in practice things would work out very differently. Once inside EMU, they contend, Britain would be forced to adopt a pan-European macro and micro-economic programme that would be highly sclerotic in nature. The idea here is that the EMU bloc will inevitably gravitate towards a genuine single economy, and most probably towards full political union as well. Once that happens, Britain's option of remaining an island of market flexibility in a sea of European regulation could be eliminated.

Anything is feasible in the long term, but this really does seem to be an unlikely nightmare. The only policy areas that do appear likely to be affected by EMU membership (other than the obvious ones of monetary and exchange-rate policy) are the macro-economic aspects of fiscal policy. Sooner or later, it will become apparent that national fiscal policies will need to be co-ordinated in order to produce a coherent out-turn for the fiscal/money mix, and that will require further budgetary integra-

tion on top of the provisions of the Stability Pact. This could also lead to some further steps towards tax harmonisation. But all this will be subject to unanimous voting and, in any case, it is not crucial to the supply side issue of product and labour market flexibility. A more comprehensive political union seems fantasy at this stage.

From the supply side point of view, therefore, we seem reasonably safe. But what about the demand side? Observing the recent behaviour of the EMU bloc, it seems quite plausible to argue that a continuing conflict between the politicians and the European Central Bank will produce a combination of recession and an overvalued exchange rate in continental Europe. Some Euro-sceptics are obviously concerned that, inside EMU, Britain would not be able to declare independence from endemic Euro-recession. Hence we would be better off outside, where we would retain the flexibility to boost UK demand by cutting domestic interest rates if necessary.

There are two key points to make about this line of argument. First, assuming that the EU is prone to continuing recessionary problems, UK exports to Europe will be adversely affected whether we are inside or outside EMU. The freedom to cut interest rates outside EMU might initially protect us from recession, but it would also worsen the UK trade deficit and lead to a depreciation in the



exchange rate. If this process were repeated for a few years in succession, the UK would soon be accused of pursuing a devaluationist strategy within the European single market. Before too long, all EMU members would start thinking about expelling the UK from the single market on the grounds that it was following a strategy of unfair competition through a weak exchange rate. In other words, it would be increasingly problematic to stay within the EU while staying independent from monetary union.

Second, would life for the UK really be so bad if we climbed into bed with a sclerotic EMU bloc? Expansionary fiscal policy would still be available in the short term

to avoid a domestic recession as European demand growth slumped. More important, in the longer term, supply-side flexibility would come to our rescue and would enable us to take an increasing share of European markets as our greater competitiveness took effect. Whereas inflation in continental Europe would remain stubbornly high during economic downturns, there would be more downward flexibility in both prices and wages in the UK. This would result in a decline in the real exchange rate, but it would be achieved in the "good" way (that is, lower inflation) instead of in the "bad" way (a lower sterling exchange rate).

Unlike in the case of sterling

devaluation, it would be quite impossible for other members of EMU to complain about an increase in UK competitiveness achieved through lower price inflation. In fact, instead of attempting to freeze the UK out of the single market, other EMU members would eventually be forced to adopt more flexible economic practices themselves in order to compete with the success of flexi-Britain.

Is this just a Europhile's pipedream? Consider the experience of Holland in the past two decades. Twenty years ago Holland was the most extreme example of the sclerotic European model – stratospheric levels of tax and spend, vast pools of structural unemployment, mind-numbing regulation in product markets, the lot. But during the 1980s, in a series of patient and painstaking reforms, the Dutch took a large dose of Anglo-Saxon reformist medicine (along with a parallel dose of centralised wage moderation). The result, as the graph shows, has been that Holland has become one of the success stories of the 1990s, despite the chronic failure of its giant neighbour Germany, with whom it has had a monetary union for over 15 years.

The Dutch example proves that a fear of catching Euro-sclerosis is an unconvincing reason for the UK to stay outside EMU. Other factors may counsel delay, but this one does not.

IN BRIEF

IMF set to announce details of new rescue package for Brazil

THE INTERNATIONAL Monetary Fund is expected to announce details of its renegotiated rescue package for Brazil within the next few days. An initial \$9bn loan from a total of \$41.5bn failed to prevent the devaluation of its currency, the real, in January. The currency has since lost 40 per cent of its value against the dollar. The new agreement, likely to involve additional tax increases and government spending cuts, should allow the release of a further tranche of the loan by the end of the month.

ECB 'must communicate better'

THE EUROPEAN Central Bank must do a better job of communicating its policies to the public, according to the OECD. The organisation says in a new report that improved communications would help to build support for the new institution among the European public. It also advises the ECB to stress its message about the limits of what monetary policy can achieve, in order to resist political pressures to cut interest rates so that governments can avoid implementing much-needed economic reforms.

UK public remains hostile to euro

PUBLIC HOSTILITY in the UK to the single currency has not been dented by the Government's National Changeover Plan. The monthly survey of opinion by Salomon Smith Barney, the investment bank, and MORI found that the balance opposed to Britain joining EMU has edged up from 18 per cent to 20 per cent, with 32 per cent in favour and 52 per cent against. Asked how they would vote if the Government strongly urged joining, the balance against was 12 per cent, up from 8 per cent the previous month. The poll was carried out over a period starting two days after the Prime Minister announced his "change of gear" on UK membership.

Informal bids tabled for First Choice

AIRTOURS AND Germany's Preussag are the early front runners in the race to win control of First Choice, the package holiday group. The two companies are believed to have tabled informal bids for the tour operator and to have been admitted to the next round of talks. First Choice, which last week admitted that it had received several approaches, is thought to be looking for an offer of at least 220p a share, valuing the group at around £800m.

Investors ditch defensive stance

CONTINENTAL EUROPEAN investors have ditched their defensive stance of the past six months and raised holdings of international stocks amid hopes of a worldwide economic recovery, a survey by Merrill Lynch will reveal today.

According to the US bank, in February European fund managers doubled their investments in Japanese equities from 2 to 4 per cent of their portfolio. The prospect of further UK rate cuts also triggered an increase in the level of holdings in London-quoted companies.

Heron to spend £250m on Euro sites

HERON INTERNATIONAL, the property company run by Gerald Ronson, will today announce a major boost to its overseas portfolio with the purchase of several sites in major European cities. The company has bought land with a total development cost of £250m in Lisbon, Nuremberg, Madrid and Milan. The purchases are part of Heron's plans to spend over a £1bn in the next five years to create a series of entertainment parks in 20 cities within the European Union.

News Analysis: MMC report on Murdoch's bid for Man United is delivered this week

Will BSkyB get the red card?

BY PETER TRAL LARSEN

THIS WEEK, the Monopolies and Mergers Commission will deliver its verdict on the proposed purchase of Manchester United by British Sky Broadcasting, Rupert Murdoch's satellite broadcaster.

In financial terms the £628m takeover, the report on which is due to be passed to Stephen Byers, the Trade and Industry Secretary, on Friday, is relatively insignificant. Nevertheless, the completion of the report marks the conclusion of one of the most high-profile investigations the MMC has ever been asked to carry out. The report will not only determine whether Britain's dominant pay-TV operator will be allowed to buy its most successful football club, it will also help to shape the future of both professional football and sport on television.

In the past four and a half months, the MMC has heard a wide range of arguments – from the highly technical to the highly emotional – about why the deal should not be allowed to go ahead. In the background, the members of the panel can hardly have missed the looming presence of Rupert Murdoch and the political power he wields.

The MMC's conclusions are a closely-guarded secret, and are likely to remain so for another month or so until Mr Byers delivers his own verdict on the takeover.

What is clear, however, is that the MMC's investigation has been much more thorough than expected. When Peter Mandelson referred the deal to the MMC last October, many believed his main motivation was to avoid accusations of being too close to Rupert Murdoch – a view shared by the media mogul.

But BSkyB and Manchester United have not had an easy ride. People close to the inquiry say they were surprised by the



Sky's big game: Opponents to the Man United takeover queued up to tell the MMC why the deal should not be allowed

Kerry Ghais/Sky

hostile line taken by the panel members during the hearings.

This hostility is likely to be a reflection of the huge number of arguments against the deal that were presented to the MMC. A strange alliance of opponents – many with conflicting motives – queued up to argue that the takeover should be blocked.

Rival media groups such as Lord Hollick's United News & Media have sought to undermine BSkyB's position by arguing that the deal is anti-competitive, but have stopped short of opposing the principle

of media groups owning football clubs. Both United News and Carlton have held talks with the current league champions Arsenal, while NTL, the cable operator, has an option to buy Newcastle United.

Football club chairmen have also been divided. Some, such as Tottenham Hotspur's Alan Sugar, are thought to have argued in favour of the deal because it is likely to trigger a wave of copycat takeovers, driving up the clubs' market value. But smaller clubs have opposed the deal because they fear that BSkyB's deep pockets will ensure that Manchester United become unbeatable.

Meanwhile, supporters' organisations have voiced the opposite concern that BSkyB would starve Manchester United of resources and squeeze the fans by forcing up ticket prices. Some have even suggested that BSkyB might order Manchester United to lose matches in order to encourage a closer league contest.

Then there have been curious interventions from the likes of Peter Rogers, the chief executive of the Independent Television Commission, who reportedly told the MMC the deal should be blocked outright even though the television watchdog's official position was more balanced. Nevertheless, competition lawyers say the MMC is likely to have accorded the greatest weight to the evidence submitted by BSkyB's competitors.

One of the most common

THE CASE AGAINST SKY

There are four main arguments against BSkyB's takeover of Manchester United.

1. By owning Manchester United, BSkyB will be able to influence the Premier League when it decides which television company should be awarded the rights to broadcast live Premier League matches. Manchester United would also be able to tip off BSkyB about bids submitted by its rivals, allowing the broadcaster to make sure it wins any rights auction.

2. BSkyB could use its ownership of Manchester United to stop the practice of making recorded highlights of Premier League matches

available on free-to-air television, allowing it to sell more dishes.

3. BSkyB could use Manchester United's position as one of the largest clubs in the country to influence the future structure of the league, the introduction of pay-per-view television, and the sharing of revenues with smaller clubs.

3. BSkyB could put up the price of match tickets at Old Trafford, excluding supporters and forcing them to watch the matches by subscribing to Sky.

the MMC is considering attaching as a condition to the takeover. This means that BSkyB would either have to show more than its current quota of 60 matches a year, or give up its exclusive grip on Premier League rights.

Even if the MMC does not go this far, it will probably require BSkyB to make its channels available to rival pay-TV platforms such as cable and ONdigital at commercial rates – something industry regulators have already been considering.

In drafting its report, however, the MMC faces a serious headache. Its conclusions depend crucially on the outcome of the Office of Fair Trading's case against Premier League, which is currently being heard before the Restrictive Practices Court.

The OFT argues that the Premier League is acting as a cartel by negotiating television rights on behalf of all its member clubs. If the OFT wins its case, all the clubs will automatically be free to sign their own broadcasting deals.

As a result, it is possible that the MMC may take the unprecedented step of delivering two rulings with two different sets of conditions – one for each possible outcome.

At the moment the odds still favour the MMC recommending that the deal be cleared subject to BSkyB and Manchester United agreeing to certain conditions. But the result will be in doubt until Mr Byers blows the final whistle.

The European Index-Tracking PEP

*Source: Microcap/GDN on an offer in bid basis based on all PEP changes with gross income reviewed from January 01, 00 to 01/01/99. Past performance is not necessarily a guide to future performance. From the 01/01/99, the results on UK dividend distributions will only be able to be reclaimed by PEPs at a reduced rate of 10%. Both capital and income values may go down as well as up and you may not get back the amount you invested. The customer's own variations may cause the value of overseas investments to increase or decrease. Full written details are available on request. All statements are correct as at 01/01/99. The Government has announced that contributions can only be made to PEPs until April 1999. From that date a new set of privileged savings vehicles, the Individual Savings Accounts (ISAs) will be available. Legal & General (Direct) Limited, Registered in England No. 2702981. Registered Office: Temple Court, 11 Queen Victoria Street, London EC4N 4TP. Representatives only of the Legal & General unit trust group, members of which are regulated by the Personal Investment Authority and DfID for the purposes of recommending, advising on and selling the investment and investment products bearing Legal & General's name. 1625710/01/01/01/99

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Intel follows Gates into monopoly court

THE US GOVERNMENT begins a key competition case this week against Intel, the chip maker that, along with software giant Microsoft, dominates the computer market.

Washington contends, as it does with Microsoft, that Intel used its market strength to edge out competitors. The two - known collectively as 'Wintel' - dominate 80 per cent of the world's computer market.

Unlike the Microsoft trial, currently in recess, the Intel trial is being held before an Administrative Law Judge of the Federal Trade Commission. The trial starts on Tuesday and is likely to last two or three months. It could be appealed to the FTC commissioners and then to federal appeals court.

The FTC has not lost a major case for some time. But it seems to be on weaker ground with Intel, and the eight months it has taken to bring the case to court

BY ANDREW MARSHALL
in Washington

have not helped as technology and markets change so fast.

The FTC says that Intel "coerced" major, established customers into granting access to their technology on terms favourable to Intel. The government says Intel demanded royalty-free use of patents owned by Intergraph, Compaq and Digital Equipment Corp, three of its customers, intending to use the data to improve its own products.

When they refused, it threatened to stop providing them with information about its chips, the government says. That information is crucial in allowing the companies to prepare for the next generation of chips as they design computers.

Intel's defence rests less on a complete denial of the government argument that it dom-

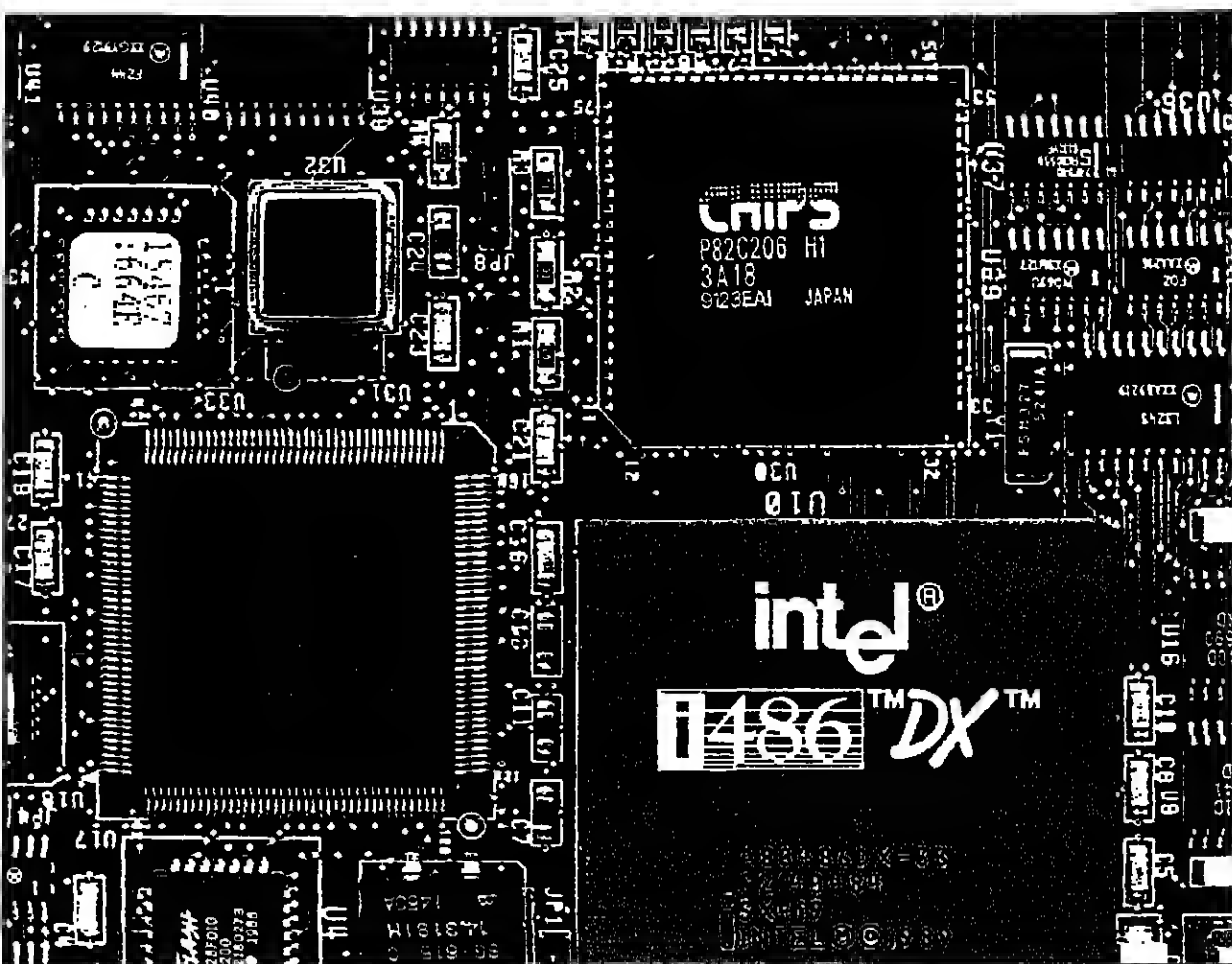
inates the market, and more on its right to do business with anyone it wants. "We were simply protecting our intellectual property rights," said Chuck Mulloy, Intel spokesman. The companies were, after all, taking legal action against Intel, he said.

Intel has in any case lost market share in the past year. Advanced Micro Devices may in January have sold more retail PC processor units than Intel for the first time, an indicator of the company's slipping grasp, although the company remains dominant in the mid-range market, the most lucrative slice.

None of the companies was directly in competition with Intel, and lawyers in Washington think the government will find it hard to prove its case on the basis of monopoly. Intel said in its pre-trial brief that there was "overwhelming evidence that competition is thriving". Although it involves some

important principles about intellectual property and the nature of client relationships, the Intel trial is unlikely to generate the same excitement as Microsoft's mammoth case. It is focused on a far narrower set of arguments and relationships. There will be less use of e-mails to demonstrate internal company policy, and Andrew Grove, Intel's chairman, is a smoother customer than Mr Gates. Both the government and Intel will bring academic experts to discuss whether or not Intel has a monopoly, but this will probably be a less hard-fought argument than in the Microsoft trial.

The relationship between Intel and Microsoft, once very close, is also more distant now. Intel's evidence in the Microsoft trial probably harmed the company, and it has sought to compete with Microsoft in the market for consumer video.



The US trade commission contends that the computer chip giant Intel used its market strength to edge out competitors - the same charge it has made against Microsoft in a case which has not yet been concluded

Canary Wharf tax breaks 'safe'

CANARY WHARF, the London Docklands property complex heading for a £2bn-plus flotation, will this week tell investors there is no threat to its multi-million pound tax breaks.

The reassurance comes as it emerged that Paul Reichmann, the chairman, could receive an extra 4 per cent stake - worth £100m - in the company if the East London development is completed and let on time.

Canary Wharf has been hit by suggestions that the Government is considering the withdrawal of a package of tax perks granted to lure new tenants.

The Government and Inland Revenue are believed to be looking at the tax breaks after a complaint by Michael Cassidy, a director of property group British Land and a former planning chief at the Corporation of London, the body responsible for the City. Cassidy's rival, Mr Cassidy is believed to have told ministers that Canary

BY FRANCESCO GUERRERA

Wharf is telling investors the perks will last until 2005, even though Parliament was told they would end in 2002.

However, in the flotation prospectus due on Thursday, Canary Wharf is expected to say its tax position is protected by law. The company is understood to have sought legal advice and been reassured their tax position is safe.

According to the lawyers the concessions, used to entice tenants from the City, were offset by funds invested by Canary Wharf to regenerate Docklands. It is believed to have spent over a £1bn to improve transport and infrastructure. The bulk of the Canary Wharf's investment was used to part-fund the Docklands Light Railway and Jubilee Line Extension. This compares with tax breaks of around £1bn in the past 10 years and of over £300m in the next few years.

WHAT THE PAPERS SAID

A ROUND-UP OF SUNDAY BUSINESS STORIES

THE INDEPENDENT

■ Business leaders are expected to welcome Gordon Brown's budget as a blueprint for economic stability and enterprise.

The chief economist of the Confederation of British Industry, Kate Barker, said she was confident her members had been heard.

■ Standard Life Investments, one of the largest shareholders in Telecom Italia, is mounting a campaign of major shareholders in the telecommunications group to block the proposed \$58bn takeover by Olivetti.

Edinburgh-based Standard believes the deal would saddle Telecom Italia with debts, hampering its future growth.

The Observer

■ Jaguar, the luxury car maker, has come back from the brink of collapse to make a £50m pre-tax profit last year.

The UK company, which is owned by Ford, is understood to have made a higher-than-expected operating profit of £250m on turnover of £1.6bn. The results follow a period of heavy losses in the early 1990s.

■ First Choice, the package holiday company, is believed to have received takeover approaches from its British rival Airtours and Germany's Preussag, owner of Thomas Cook. First Choice is aiming for an offer of around 220p per share, valuing the company at £800m.

The Sunday Telegraph

■ The US group, Mission Energy, is the front runner to buy two coal-fired power stations being auctioned by the UK generator PowerGen for up to £1bn. The American group has edged ahead of British

Energy, the privatised nuclear generator, in the race for the two plants in Ferrybridge, Yorkshire, and Fiddler's Ferry, Merseyside.

■ Royal & Sun Alliance, the insurance giant, is poised to sell its £400m British commercial property portfolio as part of its plans to boost shareholder value and make more efficient use of its capital. The company is in advanced negotiations with Moorfield Estates, a small property group.

SUNDAY BUSINESS

■ The downfall of the Flamingo Ferraris, the Credit Suisse First Boston team of traders that included Lord Archer's son James, was triggered by complaints from two rival banks. Salomon Smith Barney and HSBC alerted the authorities about CSFB's index arbitrage after noticing sharp price movements on the Stockholm bourse.

■ Life, the London futures exchange, will report its first-ever loss next month, postponing its desired stock market flotation for two or three years. The losses have been caused by cuts in fees to help stem the loss of business to other exchanges and by redundancy costs.

THE SUNDAY TIMES

■ Camelot is considering bidding for the first federal lottery in Russia.

The UK lottery operator is investigating the possibility of forming a consortium to bid for the Russian draw, set to have a television audience of over 100m people.

■ Reckitt & Colman, the household goods group, is to reshuffle its poorly performing North American operations in an attempt to reassure investors and stave off a hostile bid.

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I was mere putty in her seductive arms

THIS MAY take a little explaining, but I seem to have fallen in love with a chair. It is not any old chair, you understand, but a fantastically sexy model, lithe and bendy and curvaceous and frankly gagging to wrap you in its sinuous embrace. You may look at a photograph of my ravishing discovery (see below right), provided you treat it with respect and decorum, and do not make insulting jokes about its enormous hips. I clapped eyes on this beautiful thing in a design outlet in Islington and we bonded at once; now I am buying six of its gorgeous siblings in different colours, to transform my elderly, humid-scented, oak-panelled dining room into a super-modern harem of leggy pulchritude.

You may think me perverse. You may be right. It has happened before. Three years ago I fell for a wardrobe. Called a Gentleman's Compact, it was six feet tall, 70 years old and full of tiny compartments and I used to rest my cheek against its polished mahogany and whisper to it passionately. I ached to climb inside it and file myself away among the gentlemen's plus-fours or the tie stiffeners.

I am not alone in having a secret sexual orientation that is shamelessly furniture-driven. When Christine Keeler was photographed sitting naked astride a severe little black modernist seat, you could tell it was not the first time they had met. And Victorian parlour verse is full of saucy little rhymes in which a desperate old lecher expresses his jealousy ("Oh, most fortunate throne...") for the rush-bottomed chair upon which his lady love has recently parked her capacious buttocks.

This new chair, I learnt, is the Fantastic Plastic Elastic Chair and is designed by Ron Arad and when I rang to check when it was going to be available, he said: "Mr Arad will be signing copies of his chair at the launch." Well, I'll be damned. Is this the first sighting of the design object being marketed with the same hoo-hah that attends the launch of a book, a movie, a couture-house collection?

If Philip Treacy can launch his new line of hats along a catwalk, can Arad spring his bendy chairs on the trendy world along a catwalk? If everyone from Edward Heath to Monica Lewinsky can sign copies of their breathless memoirs, why should Arad not sign the seats of his new production? Perhaps we



JOHN WALSH
ON MONDAY

will see the new profession of Chair and Table Reviewer in the design pages of the national press.

"There's a big furniture fair in Milan next month," Arad told me, "which is just like Fashion Week. We used to throw a party to go with the exhibition, but we've got 7,000 people coming, and there was so much squeezing and pushing, you could only see the backs of people's necks. We had to pay fines every year when the traffic got blocked outside the front door."

Well well. Plastic furniture - it's the new rock'n'roll.

WHAT ON earth is happening to *The Archers*? Everyone is behaving as if they were in *EastEnders*. Argue

argue, bitch bitch, complain complain. I have tuned in and out of the Brummie-rustics drama several thousand times in the past 20 years, but often by accident and rarely with much enthusiasm. Mostly I have been perplexed by the swapping of agricultural jargon about organic loam and enervated by the way the cast spend so much time a) sighing, b) conversing in clichés and c) making each other pots of tea.

Now everything has changed. The action has toughened up. The characters have discovered their dark sides. Pat has turned into an imperious termagant, a cross between Betty Boothroyd and Kathy Bates in *Misery*. She bawled out Clarrie Grundy for putting the wrong date-stamp on her eggs. She tore strips off her son Tommy for making organic sausages on the sky. She has just had a violent row with her daughter about the reputation of the farm. The signs are all too clear - the seething, the sick headaches and that tell-tale mantra of "Could you please just drop it?" If I am any judge of soap operas, she is about to have a nervous breakdown - although a noisy suicide with a shotgun or silage-fail, should such a thing exist, cannot be ruled out.

But everyone seems to be yelling at each other at the moment, from Home Farm to Grey Gables. David bawled out poor Bert Whatshisname for dropping a blender scoop on to a mixer truck, or vice versa, and smashing it to bits. Neil, the posh-sounding contract labourer, vituperated at David for dumping him. William, the feckless bird-lover, was ticked off by his dad for wanting to give up gamekeeping and become an international ballet dancer or something (details were hazy through all that arguing). And Sid Perks, the barman with the dubious fitness regimen, yelled at everyone when he dropped a Bullworker on his toe.

It is all getting very Quentin Tarantino. Violence, conflict, families torn asunder, crashing machinery, broken limbs, existential despair and gratuitous organic sausage just look what

has become of the sleepy Midlands countryside. Next thing you know, there will be an outbreak of ethnic cleansing.

Should you be planning a trip to Birmingham, I would steer clear: just for now, of the dangerous territory known as Former Ambridge.

ACCORDING TO the results of a Gallup poll out this week, the British are getting seriously keen on clubs. The poll, commissioned by the Britannia Building Society, discovered that being in a club was the "number one pastime" for 21 million people in the United Kingdom.

Clubs once meant associations of like-minded people. Then it came to mean places called Boodles or Pratts, having proposers and seconders, wearing biliously coloured ties and taking snuff. When that became too elitist for modern tastes, the only clubs you could be part of were declassés ones (thus Tony Blair's Who's Who entry lists, under Clubs, "Trimdon Colliery and Deaf Hill Working Men's" and "Fishburn Working Men's").

Then it became attached to up-market wine bars in Soho full of resting scriptwriters. Then "clubbing" meant turning up around midnight at a nasty-looking disco off the Charring Cross Road and begging a grumpy macrocephaloid in a shiny tuxedo to let you go in and spend £60 on dancing, drinking and ingesting something that turned out, on sober inspection, to be French chalk. Now the word has been reclaimed and clubs are once again convocations of enthusiasts, exclusive gatherings of people with a shared interest in string.

It seems the Internet is responsible. Once a hundred people have checked into the website devoted to the films of Virginia Mayo, what could be more natural than to meet to compare skills? Activities that were once the province of the snorak and the saddle (dowsing, collecting empty sugar-cube boxes, recreating the



The Grundys, beleaguered *'Archers'* family: above from left, Eddie, William, Joe and Clarrie

English Civil War) now each has an Information Exchange and a club of no-longer-future zealots. There are frogman clubs, make-your-own-rocket clubs, Peter Mandelson appreciation clubs.

Which leaves me with only one concern. The poll's secondary finding is that the average Briton joins six clubs in a lifetime. Right then. Chess Club at school, Arts Club and Guitar Club at university (the latter only briefly: I couldn't do the "Layla" riff in under seven seconds), then Groucho's and the Chelsea Arts - that means I've got just one to go. What will it be? The Ron Arad Chair Appreciation Society? But what would we all do once we had sat down?

THE QUEEN ran into a colleague of mine last week in the interval at

Oklahoma! "Not bad is it?" she said, cheerily humming a few bars of "Oh what a Beautiful Mornin'." "Though, at the end of the day I preferred whatshisname, Gordon Macrae in the movie. Fancy a gear-an'-tee?"

No, okay, it did not happen quite like that but he did meet Her Madge last week and has become immensely pleased with himself. She was, he said, a vision in white with lilac splodges (he is not on the fashion desk, luckily) as she greeted seven London drama critics, Nicholas De Jongh and Charles Spencer and Benedict Nightingale among them, in the temporarily closed-off royal circle bar of the Lyceum. "How nice for you all to have the evening off," she said.

The assembled drama-crits (they were shuffled and loaded and tried to remember the Palace

dictats about saying "Ma'am as in Pam, not Ma'am as in farm", and not asking her questions or trying to bog the conversation. Sheridan Morley boldly namedropped the Prince of Wales ("I was just in New York with your son" - they'd been to the unveiling of a statue to Noel Coward) and Michael Coveney risked being jumped on by royal minders for asking - he just came straight out with it, without so much as a by-your-leave - "Have you enjoyed your day, Ma'am?"

Well, had she enjoyed this public relations-directed excursion to the heart of theatreland? Was it very different from her visits to civic centres in the Midlands? "No," said HM to the crestfallen backs, "it's just like going to Birmingham - you get a show at the end of it."

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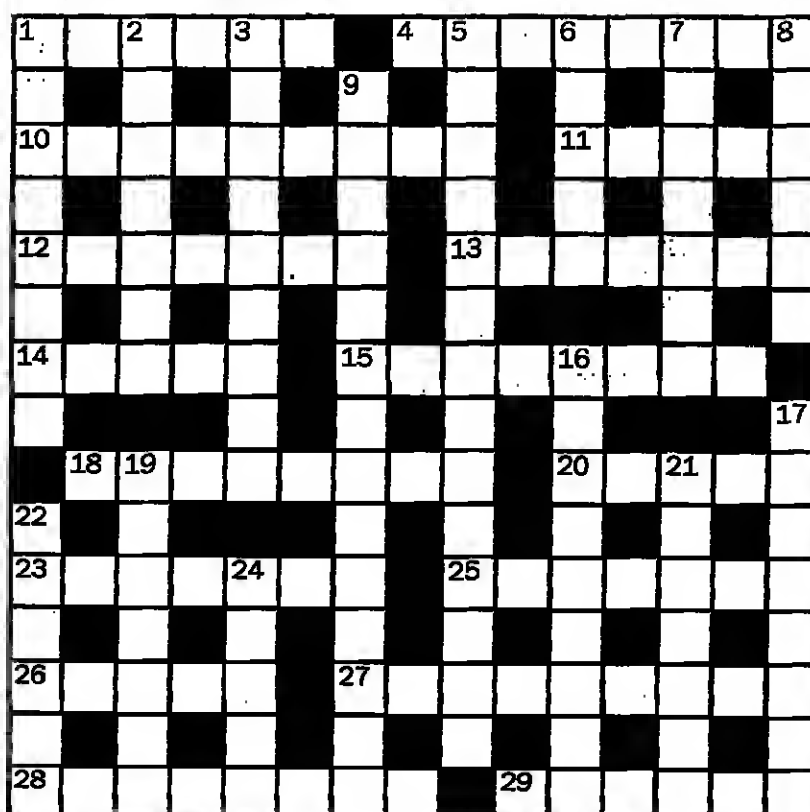
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THE MONDAY CROSSWORD

No.3864 Monday 8 March

by Portia



- ACROSS**
- Refer to doctor in case (6)
 - Twist lines to mean the exact opposite (8)
 - Keep out a celebrity, initially (3,1,5)
 - Unlawful to expel the Italian who's legitimate (5)
 - Shock - rector is in religious sect (7)
 - Squash score overturned though level
- DOWN**
- Describe what little remains (5)
 - Eastern ringroad interfered with US river (3,6)
 - Quit losing after a short distance (4,4)
 - Empties litre into reserves (6)
 - Return ticket to Westminster? (4,4)
 - Twice save American girl (7)
 - Auditor has power within home area (9)
 - Excluded by order, being unfit (3,2,9)
 - Students entering through house (5)
 - Telling performance (7)
 - No longer mind increase in size (6)
 - Look surprised as boy is aware Rene's upset (5,2,7)
 - Hereditary earls act irresponsibly about abolition, ultimately (9)
 - Advance crowd circling round king (8)
 - Old-fashioned quality (7)
 - Later seizes a number by force in France (7)
 - Only country to admit royal conspirator (6)
 - Nymph in folklore Adam researched (5)

FULL SPORT COVERAGE IN NEW 12-PAGE SECTION

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3 Four-goal Newcastle cruise through to semi-finals
9 Irvine breaks his grand prix duck Down Under
11 Baulch crowns a golden weekend for Wales
12 Super League rookies lose to Rhinos



SPORT

8 March 1999

Vialli's men stand defiant

BY GLENN MOORE

Manchester United
Chelsea
Replay, Wednesday 7.45pm

THEY WERE dogged and determined with concentration etched across their brows and resounding in their tackles. These adjectives, which epitomised Chelsea's defence in yesterday's FA Cup quarter-final at Old Trafford, used to be absent on their travels, but under Gianluca Vialli they have become harder to beat than any team in the land.

Only three sides have defeated them in 40 matches this season and, for the third time since November, Manchester United again failed to join that select band. Even the advantage of having an extra man for 40 minutes failed to tilt the balance as United, for only the second time in 26 matches, drew a blank. As if to underline Chelsea's new solidity, they were the successful defence on the other occasion.

The replay, for the right to meet in the semi-final, will be at Stamford Bridge this Wednesday. It could be a lively affair. Roberto Di Matteo, after 45 minutes, and Paul Scholes, after 85, were sent off yesterday. On Wednesday, adding fuel to the simmering flames, Dennis Wise is back from suspension.

SEMI-FINAL DRAW

Newcastle United v
Barnsley or Tottenham
Hotspur

Manchester United or
Chelsea v Arsenal

Matches to be played on
Sunday 11 April at venues to
be arranged

Chelsea will also have Frank Leboeuf and Célestine Babayaro back from suspension but United can call on Jaap Stam and Ryan Giggs, respectively suspended and injured yesterday. Alex Ferguson may also decide to start with Dwight Yorke and Andy Cole, he gambled on leaving them on the bench yesterday and paid for it.

"I thought we played well but if we get chances like that we have to take them," Ferguson said. "We did everything but score. We should be in the semi-final, we had one or two golden opportunities - Scholes could have scored four."

He added of Scholes: "He was sent off for an innocuous challenge. The referee is probably the best here in the country and he should have used his experience more than he did. He sent him off to even it up which is wrong."

Vialli, who would not discuss the dismissal, said: "It was not our best performance for passing and attacking but it was about spirit and determination. We were very good defensively."

Chelsea's defence was centred on the magnificent Marcel Desailly. He is a winner and he is a bit more angry now than when he first came out that makes a difference," Vialli said. "After the World Cup it was difficult to make such a huge change from Italy to England and find liberation after winning the World



Manchester United substitute Dwight Yorke dissects the Chelsea defence with this overhead kick in the FA Cup sixth-round tie at Old Trafford yesterday

David Ashdown

Cup) but he is now performing at his best which is nice because this is the crucial moment of the season. He is a player who, when the task is difficult, looks to his inner strength."

The absence of Yorke and Cole had undoubtedly helped Desailly but he was just as commanding when they belatedly arrived. Before then Ole Gunnar Solskjær had been alone in attack and, with Phil Neville deputised to man-mark Gianfranco Zola, United had a defensive look at odds with their desire to avoid a replay.

Chelsea were similarly under-

strength though this owed less to choice than to the constraints imposed by suspension and injury which robbed Vialli of seven senior players, including himself.

United may have appeared negative in shape but they were not so in spirit but, though they pushed forward eagerly, they failed to create a genuine chance before the 38th minute. Then Gary Neville, of all people, almost put them ahead with a diving header from Beckham's beautifully-judged cross. The ball skimmed off his head to strike the far post before being hacked clear.

It was as close as United were to come though that seemed unlikely when, as half-time approached, Di Matteo was dismissed. Booked for a late tackle on Beckham after 25 minutes he was cautioned again for a similar lunge at Scholes. On neither occasion did he hurt the player, and on the second he appeared to be attempting to pull out, but both were within yards of Durkin who had already made it clear he was going to referee by the book. It was the eighth dismissal suffered by Chelsea this season.

Chelsea re-organised by with-

drawing Petrescu, who had been a negligible influence as skipper, and replacing him with Eddie Newton who immediately became their seventh captain of the season. They then pulled in the wingers and invited United to break them down.

They could not. There was no lack of chances, with United having 24 goal attempts across the 90 minutes, but only five were on target. The best chances fell to Beckham, who spooned his shot over when set up by Scholes, and Scholes himself. He brought two great saves from De Goey, a diving stop after 57 minutes

and a leaping tip over the bar with 15 minutes of the match remaining.

Instead of being the hero Scholes ended the villain. Harshly booked for fouling Petrescu just before the break he went for a clumsy challenge on Goldback.

United, who have beaten Chelsea in the FA Cup three times in the last five seasons, will not fear a trip to London. "We've a good record down there," Ferguson said. Both he and Vialli agreed that Arsenal, already with the lightest fixture load, were the day's winners. "They are favourites for the League now,"

added the United manager "but we're still in the Cup and we've got to take that."

Manchester United (3-3-3-1): Schmeichel; Berg, P. Neville (Törke, 70), Brown; G. Neville, Keane, Irwin; Beckham, Scholes, Barnes (Sheenham, 81); Solis (Cole, 81). Substitutes not used: Van der Gouw (gh), Curran, Chelmon (4-4-1-1); De Goey, Ferrer, Lambourde, Desailly, Le Sauc Petrescu (Newton, 8-1), Di Matteo, Morris, Goldback, Zola (Myers, 78), Pa (Forsell, 59). Substitutes not used: Hitchcock (gh), Nicholls.

Referee: P. Durkin (Portland)

Sendings off: Manchester United: Scholes (85), Chelsea: Di Matteo (45).



Bookings: Manchester United: Keane, Scholes, P. Neville; Chelsea: Desailly, Di Matteo

Man of the match: Desailly

Attendance: 54,587.

United await takeover verdict, News section, page 14

Football: 2-5 ■ Week ahead: 6-7 ■ Rugby Union: 8 ■ Motor Racing: 9 ■ Racing: 10 ■ Athletics: 11 ■ Rugby League: 12



Re-incarnation

ABBOT ALE WORSHIPPED SINCE 1799

A plate of chips and a Cornish pasting

CHELSEA AGAINST Liverpool seemed an attractive prospect last weekend: the multi-national entertainers against the former greats struggling to make sense of their season.

However, choosing a match has been harder since I left the Football Association; arrangements are not so easily made, and other factors often intrude. On this occasion my new wife wanted to visit Cornwall to regale her relatives with the details of our nuptials.

The long drive from the edge of the Pons on a wet Friday evening is not improved by the Highways Agency's apologies for delay. There was not much left of the day when we finally arrived near St Austell, so on Saturday I did not relish

travelling very far. The west-ern-most fixture in the Screwfix Direct Western League appeared to be at Bideford.

Rather than seize the chance to quiz the gentlemen or ladies of Screwfix about their experience of sponsoring football, I decided we would find a match nearer our base.

The Jewson South Western League operates further west, so Wadebridge Town v Bodmin Town was ideal. Great nephew Jason, a nine-year-old long-distance Liverpool supporter, had, surprisingly, known that Bodmin played in yellow.

Thus when we arrived at Bodieve Park shortly after the 2.30pm kick off, we knew right away the early strike from the team in red was a home goal.

Wadebridge boasts "ample" cover on page 716 of the *Non-League Directory*. It may be ample for their average attendance, but the small terrace in question could not accommodate many of the 126 fans who enjoyed this Cornish derby.

Half-time came with the score at 2-0. We asked the groundsmen whether Wadebridge would struggle to hold their lead with the wind and slope against them. He seemed to take umbrage at our unintended slur on his pitch. "It's the same for both teams," he gruffly replied.

Perhaps it was, but the visitors, Bodmin, never adapted to the unique contours. The Wadebridge striker, Mark Rapsey, scored a hat-trick,



GRAHAM KELLY

missed a penalty and strongly urged me to recommend him to Kevin Keegan as we chatted after the 4-0 home win.

The Cornish hospitality was as warm as usual, even to the extent that I was offered a

guest appearance in the Wadebridge veterans team the following morning. My playing reputation had clearly preceded me.

So, early Sunday found us on the road again, following some very precise directions to a delightful little sailing and holiday spot, Mawnan Smith, near Falmouth. The hosts were cleaning mud out of the showers when I entered the tiny dressing-room.

Soon after, the bus carrying the Wadebridge team and supporters (six wives) wound its way down the narrow lane to the ground, the driver having lost his way twice.

Players of my vintage always vie for the shorts with the 34-inch waist. No one will

admit to 36 or 38. After introductions I surreptitiously squeezed into the only 38 in the kitbag. It seemed to me that the much lauded No 12 shirt, allegedly a large, had somehow shrunk to become a small-medium. The playing kit thus rendered any sharp turns to tally out the question.

As I went out to warm up (it only takes me two minutes nowadays, otherwise my game is badly affected), I realised that it was going to be a difficult match. The pitch was choppy, the breeze formidable and the slope, again, considerable.

However, all went well. I struck up an instant understanding with my new teammates, who realised after their

first through ball eluded my attempts to control it and rolled speedily towards the Channel that I wanted passes to feet. I am a deceptive footballer, slower than I look. We won 4-0 to complete a successful double for Wadebridge. After the obligatory group photograph and a plate of chips, we said our farewells and I settled down with the newspapers for the long journey home.

Robbie Fowler had reportedly made a disgusting gesture to Graeme Le Saux. Now while the Laws of the Game say that a player must be sent off if he is heard by the referee to use offensive, insulting or abusive language, there is insufficient punishment for obscene gestures. The offending player

can be cautioned for unsporting behaviour, but this is not enough. There should be an offence of gross unsporting behaviour.

Nor can the referee be expected to hear the verbal exchanges that occur between opponents, whether the taunts are of a racist, sexist or merely abusive nature.

Stedding needs to be outlawed by a Professional Footballers' Association edict. If the Fowler-Le Saux bust up leads to the players (and the managers) agreeing to stamp out verbal wind-ups, then all the fuss will have been worth while.

But sadly the fresh air of Cornwall already seems a distant memory.



Chris Perry, the Wimbledon central defender, tracks Leicester City's danger man, Tony Cottee, at Selhurst Park during Saturday's Premiership confrontation.

Guppy strike stops rot at Leicester

THERE WAS something terribly ironic in an item carried in Saturday's programme, on a page evidently printed before last Wednesday night. It said: "Joe Kinnear made history in midweek, with the game at Sheffield Wednesday, when he became the longest serving manager in Wimbledon's League history. Joe equalled Dave Bassett's 283 League games in charge with the 11 draw at Everton before clocking up the record-breaking game at Middlesbrough."

Having been eliminated from both cup competitions by his old club, Spurs, in the previous month, and having expended considerable energy along the

BY ADAM SZCZETEK

Wimbledon	0
Leicester City	1

way Wimbledon's season was in danger of falling apart. So when news came through of their 2-1 victory in Sheffield to follow two battling draws with Everton and Aston Villa, it was hard not to think "Good old Joe, he's turned them round again."

Then came the announcement that he had suffered a heart attack an hour or so before Wednesday night's game. If any Premiership manager deserves a good, long rest it would be Kinnear and even he might have been glad to

spend Saturday afternoon in his hospital bed, rather than watching this miserable match.

The second-lowest crowd of the season had turned out to greet the Worthington Cup finalists, and those who stayed away probably enjoyed a fine afternoon. The meeting of the two clubs who, more than any others, have won plaudits and admiration for their ability simply to survive in the top flight over the past few seasons was never likely to be a classic, and so it proved.

The small crowd, the bumpy pitch and, frankly, the quality of the football made it akin to watching a practice match at times. In the circumstances it would be appropriate to dwell

on the positive aspects of the game and ignore both teams' shortcomings, but the plain fact is that Steve Guppy's wonderful winning strike from distance in the sixth minute apart, there were precious few.

For Wimbledon Marcus Gayle went close with a header in first-half injury-time and 10 minutes after the break, with Frenchman Pegguy Arphexad replacing the injured Kasey Keller in the Leicester goal, Jason Euell had an equaliser mysteriously ruled out, possibly for offside. John Hartson, back after his four-match suspension, made no impact after coming on for Efan Ekoku a minute later.

Steve Walsh hit the bar for Leicester midway through the second half and Tony Cottee squandered a couple of half-chances, but nothing was going to stop their manager, Martin O'Neill, savouring the arrest of their recent bad run of results that had threatened to overshadow the trip to Wembley in a European's time.

"It's the usual thing," O'Neill said. "We thought we were better than our position, but you're never better than your position, so today was massive for us." He added that Keller's withdrawal was merely a precaution.

"Hopefully Joe was asleep and hasn't heard the result," said David Kemp, in charge of

Wimbledon along with Mick Harford in Kinnear's absence. "It's been a traumatic week. Maybe the seriousness of his illness has started to sink in for the players, but hopefully we can put it behind us. One of the major incidents in this club's history has happened - we don't want to make excuses but it's a football team perspective."

Goal: Guppy (6) 0-1. Wimbledon (4-2-3): Sullivan; Carrington, Perry, Thurston, Kinnear, Roberts, Euell, Batic, Ekoku (Hartson, 56), M. Hughes (C. Hughes, 75). Gulls: Substitutes not used: Arling, Carr, Head (6). Leicester City (3-5-2): Keller (Arphexad, 1-4), Elliott, Sagar, Walsh, Karmark, Savage, Lennon, Ezzet, Guppy, Cottee, Marshall. Substitutes not used: Gunnlaugsson, Fenton, Impy, Zaporozh. Referee: R. Harris (Oxford). Bookings: Wimbledon: C. Hughes. Man of the match: Guppy. Attendance: 11,801.

Saints take diabolical liberties and prosper

LAST APRIL, Southampton, sitting pretty for once in the middle of the table, ended West Ham's ambitions of European football with a devil-may-care 4-2 win at Upton Park. This season they are playing a more familiar game of devil-take-the-hindmost, and as well as undermining the London club's aspirations again, Saturday's much closer victory offered renewed hope of escaping Old Nick's clutches.

It was a fourth home success in a row, but the pressure to keep winning at The Dell - already fierce - will increase further if Dave Jones's team continue to falter on the road. After the Middlesbrough match on Sunday, their next trip is to Coventry on Easter Monday, which is a date to be ringed on all those Hampshire Country-side calendars, along with the visits from Blackburn (17 April) and Everton in a potential epic on the last day of the season.

On their own tight little pitch in front of supportive capacity crowds, and with an attacking formation, Southampton have dropped only two points since November. Picking both Matt Le Tissier and Hassan

BY STEVE TONGUE

Southampton	1
West Ham United	0

Kachoul behind two strikers gives their opponents something to think about most of the time, though to be fair to Jones, it is easy to see that his suspect defence does not then get the protection it needs.

Although Le Tissier made one important goal-line clearance on Saturday, his best friends would not claim tracking opposing midfielders as a strength, and Kachoul's weakness in the same area meant that for long periods West Ham were able to attack at will down his flank. Unfortunately, Ian Pearce, a big, strong centre-half, spent the second half playing there, his wild shot over the bar from six yards out the result of having such an obviously square peg in a round hole.

Marc Keller and Eyal Berkovic were also guilty of bad misses from close in. When Trevor Sinclair shot more accurately, Paul Jones made two excellent saves. Scott Hiley backing him up on the second occasion with a heroic clear-

ance under pressure. "I can't believe we haven't taken anything from the game," lamented Harry Redknapp, the manager. "I couldn't fault the effort, but the final bit of quality in delivering the ball or hitting the back of the net was missing."

Good fortune was hiding, as well, when Southampton mounted their first attack in the 10th minute, at which point West Ham had already had four scoring opportunities. Kachoul's drive would have gone straight to Shaika Hislop, but Rio Ferdinand's unnecessary deflection deceived the cooler Shaika and slid inside his right-hand post.

Even if the Saints are granted some of that sort of luck on their travels in the next six weeks, staying up will still be devilishly difficult. Goal: Kachoul (10) 1-0. Southampton (4-4-2): Jones; Hiley, Lundström, Beron, Collier; Oakley, Le Tissier (Riley, 55), Morrison, Kachoul, Sinclair, M. Hughes. Substitutes not used: O. Hughes, Bridges, Moss, Marshall (6). West Ham United (3-5-2): Hislop; Pearce, Ferdinand, Raddocci, Lomas, Lampard, Fox (Kison, 71), Berkovic, Keller, Sinclair. Di. Cane. Substitutes not used: Minzo, Morrison, Potts, Forrest (6). Referee: D. Gallagher (Barnbury). Bookings: None. Man of the match: Jones. Attendance: 15,240.

Coventry well placed to shift the pressure

BY JON CULLEY
Coventry City
Charlton Athletic

Aloisi, fêted after scoring two of the four goals his side put past Villa, was the casualty of a running battle with Charlton's Danny Mills, whom he alleged had been sledging throughout the match as well as leaving studs on his chest. Their spat was not in the Fowler-Le Saux bracket but unseemly none the less. Aloisi was foolish to react but had cause to be hard done by after Mills responded to an outstretched arm as if punched by Mike Tyson.

The incident reshaped the match, but not to the benefit of Charlton, whom their manager, Alan Curbishley, said had not known how to win against 18 angry opponents. "I wanted people to be upfield, keeping their players away from our goal," he said. "But when they attacked us we panicked, we pulled people behind the ball but they weren't doing anything, weren't marking people."

Coventry did know what to do and scored twice in the last 24 minutes, first through Neil Whelan, who took up a strike position after Aloisi's red card, having started as suspended George Boateng's replacement on the right of midfield, and then Trond Solvedt.

The Norwegian midfielder, whose goals this season have been scored as substitutes, pulled off the trick for the third time, with the help of a deflection off - somewhat apologetically - a week discussing the hindquarters of a footballer's anatomy - Danny Mills's bottom.

Goal: Robinson (25) 0-1; Whelan (44) 1-1; Solvedt (82) 2-1. Coventry City (4-4-2): Hedman; Nelson, Shaw, Williams, Burrows, Whelan, Ellis, McMillan; Froggatt, Hadenbury (Solomon, 75), Aloisi. Substitutes not used: G. Jones, Giacomini, Shilton, Ogilvie (6). Charlton Athletic (3-5-2): Royce; Mills, B. Johnson, A. Johnson, G. Jones, Kinella, Redfern (Garnham, 65), Powell; Pringle, Hunt (Morrison, 75), Sullivan. Referee: J. Winter (Stockton-on-Tees). Sending-off: Coventry: Aloisi (75). Bookings: Coventry: Hedman, Whelan, Charlton: Redfern. Man of the match: McMillan. Attendance: 20,259.

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EAST FIFE	V	LIVINGSTON			

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24/1/2015

Geordie hero has Georgia in mind



THE GEORDIE hero from Georgia might not be on Tyneside beyond the summer. Even if he plays in every game between now and the season's end, Temuri Ketsbaia will not satisfy the Department of Employment's stipulation that foreign legionnaires in English football must appear in 75 per cent of their club's matches to have their work permit renewed.

Everton were left wishing he had been sent home already. The main reason the Toffees came unstuck on a cloying St James' Park pitch was the strikingly different forward with the strikingly polished pate.

He scored twice and set up an Alan Shearer goal as Newcastle moved within one match of returning to the twin domes of Wembley for the FA Cup final. They did so under the guidance of Ruud Gullit, who lifted the old tin pot with 'elsea two years ago, but, ironically, with the vital assistance of two bargain buys he inherited from the manager who presided over Newcastle's Cup final embarrassment against Arsenal last May.

Kenny Dalglish could have been excused a wry smile in the television commentary box as he watched Ketsbaia and George Georgiadis, who scored Newcastle's crucial second goal, steer his old club into the semi-finals. He brought the former to St James' Park on a free-transfer from AEK Athens and the latter from Panathinaikos for £450,000. It was his successor, though, who wore the broadest smile afterwards. "We are going in the right direction," Gullit said. "The players are responding well to what we want to do here. I think sometimes they don't believe how good they can play."

Everton had not won at St James' since Boxing Day 1986, en route to their second championship under Howard Kendall. They still had Dave Watson at the heart of their

BY SIMON TURNBULL

Newcastle United 4
Everton 1

defence yesterday but they were found short of trophy-winning quality in the final half an hour.

That they were short of luck, too, was evident from the 10th minute, when Francis Jeffers shot across the face of the home goal after Nick Barmby found the teenager unmarked on the left angle of the Newcastle penalty area. Fortune did not favour them in the 20th minute, either.

The right-foot shot Ketsbaia delivered from 20 yards would have been tipped wide by Thomas Myhre had it not taken a deflection off Marco Materazzi on its way towards the Leazes End goal. The build-up, however, was worthy of reward, Shearer having flicked Silvio Marić's ball from the left invitingly into the path of his striking partner.

It was a different story after the break. With Don Hutchison pushed forward and Barmby scheming impishly, Everton took control for quarter-of-an-hour.

They drew level in the 57th minute, David Unsworth unleashing an unstoppable left-foot shot from the fringe of the Newcastle penalty area. The tide, however, turned decisively against them five minutes later.

Hutchison left Shearer in a heap 25 yards from goal and Myhre was unable to hold on to the low free-kick Dietmar Hamann swept into the goalmouth. Materazzi tried to back the loose ball clear but Georgiadis, a 54th-minute substitute for the debutant Marić, returned it with interest, his low shot rubbing salt into the Italian defender's wounds as it took a deflection off him on its way into the net.

Georgiadis, 27, today, was celebrating again after 73 minutes. It was his rolled pass from the left that led to Ketsbaia's second goal, though it was no formality for the Georgian, who jinked inside his marker before beating Myhre with a sweetly-struck left foot drive.

It gave Newcastle the luxury of a two-goal cushion but they ventured further into the comfort zone before the final whistle. After the Georgian and Georgiadis, it was left to a



Newcastle's Alan Shearer and Temuri Ketsbaia celebrate sealing Everton's fate in yesterday's quarter-final PA

finished it with a blasting right-foot shot - after exchanging passes with Ketsbaia, who had to elude three defenders to keep the attack in motion.

The hope on Tyneside today is that Newcastle can somehow keep the Georgian Georgiadis.

Goalie: Ketsbaia (21) 1-0; Unsworth (57) 1-1; Georgiadis (52) 2-1; Ketsbaia (73) 3-1; Shearer (81) 4-1.

Newcastle United (4-4-2): Gullit; Barton, Debatz, Howe, Doris; Solano, Lee, Hamann, Marić (Georgiadis, 54); Shearer, Ketsbaia. Substitutes not used: Charvet, Saha, Brady, Harper (84).

Everton (4-4-2): Myhre; West, Watson, Materazzi, O'Brien; Barry, Unsworth, Hutchison, Grant; Jeffers (Owen, 74); Cardonnel (Bakajiga, 74). Substitutes not used: Short, Branch, Simonsen (84).

Referee: G Barber (Surrey).

Bookings: Newcastle: Barton, Debatz; Everton: Hutchison.

Man of the match: Barmby.

Attendance: 36,594.

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It was a superbly crafted goal that spoke volumes for the fluent football Gullit has slowly teased from his team in his six months on Tyneside. Hamann launched the move with a fine ball to Shearer, who

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Bergkamp blows aside Smith plan

BY KEN JONES

Arsenal 1
Derby County 0

THIS IS what Arsène Wenger had to say about the referee Steve Dunn, who repeatedly came under fire from Arsenal's supporters during the FA Cup quarter-final against Derby County on Saturday: "It was a difficult match for him."

If we are used to Wenger's diplomacy, and there is legitimate cause for concern about the standard of match officials, generally, Dunn deserved more credit that the crowd was prepared to give him.

The difficulty Arsenal's manager had in mind sprang from Derby's deployment of Lee Carsley as a policeman on Dennis Bergkamp and their determination to make life difficult for the Cup holders.

This led quickly to a heavy tackle on Bergkamp that looked fair enough and would prove so under television scrutiny.

The trouble is - and the authorities are greatly to blame for this - supporters have been introduced to the notion of a game without heavy physical contact and weighted in favour of the artist.

A personal point of view is that despite his issue of nine yellow cards and dismissing Dean Sturridge for disputing the legitimacy of Arsenal's last-minute winner, Dunn did his best to keep the game flowing.

That very few Arsenal supporters agreed was evident from calls made later to David Mellor's pompously presented Saturday night radio programme. It appears that none took into account the problems Wenger had identified when speaking about the 1-0 victory that kept Arsenal on course for a second successive Double. As for Mellor, while there is plenty of room for improvement in referees it will not be achieved by his egotistical hectoring.

Jim Smith's philosophical acceptance of another FA Cup disappointment - 30 years in the game without a Wembley appearance - was a healthy reminder that there are sounder men than Mellor in positions of influence.

"We came with a plan and it almost worked," he mused. "It's hard to lose with only 53 seconds left but that's cup football. In any case I don't sit at home thinking about how great it would be to lead a team out in the Cup final. 'That's more your minds. My priority

is league football, doing well in the Cup is just a bonus."

Wenger pointed out that he could be better placed to emulate last season's splendid achievements. "At this time a year ago we knew that it was possible to become champions by winning all our games and drew a First Division club [Wolverhampton] in the semi-finals," he said. "Now we need Manchester United and Chelsea to lose while we are winning."

With less than a minute of normal time left on Saturday the Arsenal manager was facing the prospect of a difficult replay. Then Bergkamp slipped Carsley's clutches to win a corner that would fall luckily for the substitute Nwankwo Kanu to turn and hook in the winner.

Derby deserved better but paid again for not being able to match defensive efficiency (third best in the Premiership) with purposeful attacking. "It's been a big problem all season," Igor Simac, the centre-half, said. "We just don't take our chances." Smith nodded in rueful agreement. "We had opportunities in the first half but it was the same old story. After that we were always under pressure."

Unable to establish contact with their attackers, giving the ball away too cheaply when they did, Derby provided Arsenal with plenty of opportunities to press forward and Ray Parlour with room to compensate for the absence of Emmanuel Petit and Patrick Vieira. "The fact that we had 19 shots speaks for itself," Wenger said.

Maybe, but statistics are unfair to Derby's well organised grit and a dedicated response to the plan that Smith laid out for them.

Goal: Kanu (90) 1-0.

Arsenal (4-4-2): Seaman; Dixon, Keown, Adams, Winterburn; Ljungberg (Kanu, 60), Parlour, Hughes (Vivas, 56), Overmars (Dunne, 77), Anelka, Bergkamp. Substitutes not used: Upton, Mannering (84).

Derby County (1-4-2-3): Houli; Simac; Lumsden, Pritch, Carsley, Schmeiser (Hunt, 88), Erank, Powell, Wanchoppe, Sturridge, Burton. Substitutes not used: Harper, Kodjak, Balano, Poom (84).

Referee: S Dunn (Bristol).

Send-off: Derby Sturridge (89).

Bookings: Arsenal: Winterburn, Anelka, Parlour, Vivas, Derby: Schmeiser, Powell, Sturridge, Lumsden, Erank.

Man of the match: Parlour.

Attendance: 36,046.

Old Firm Cup final on the cards Demand for young Blades bothers Bruce

THE DRAW for the semi-finals of the Tennent's Scottish Cup has opened the door for the first Old Firm final for 10 years.

Rangers, who struggled for long periods in their 2-1 win over Falkirk yesterday, were drawn with St Johnstone who had beaten Motherwell on Saturday.

Tonight Celtic are at Morton, the winners meeting either Ayer United or Dundee United, who meet in the fourth quarter-final on Saturday.

Darren Dods and Miguel Simao were the heroes for St Johnstone in their win at Fir

SCOTTISH ROUND-UP

BY DAVID MCKINNEY

Park, while the Rangers coach, Dick Advocaat, expressed disappointment with his team's display against Falkirk, of the First Division.

Nell McCann and Lorenzo Amoroso were on target but after David Moss had equalised McCann's goal, Stefan Klos, the Rangers goalkeeper, had to rescue his side on several occasions.

"There were some very poor performances," Advocaat said. "Falkirk did well. They were well organised at the back and looked fresher than us today."

The semi-final against St Johnstone has again paired the League Cup finalists of earlier in the season, with Rangers winning 2-1 on that occasion.

But Sandy Clark, the St Johnstone manager, commented: "We have played Rangers a few times this season and have been getting closer to them, so hopefully this time we can go one better."

Celtic travel to Greenock to take on a Morton side managed

by one of their former employees, Billy Stark was assistant to Tommy Burns for three years at Celtic; he has spent much of this week playing down talk of revenge, but will be determined that his side puts up a good show in what will be the last big occasion to be held at their antiquated Cappielow Ground.

Dundee United overcame the challenge of First Division Clydebank after a replay, and as Paul Sturrock's side has struggled in the tournament they can anticipate a tough tie at Ayer, where Kilmarnock were beaten in an earlier round.

looping header that went in off the bar and held on to it until the finish. Piacenza had Cleto Polonia sent off for a second bookable offence in the 55th minute.

Barcelona extended their lead in the Spanish first division to four points with a comfortable 4-1 win at Salamanca while Real Mallorca surprisingly lost 2-0 at lowly Alaves. Valencia leap-frogged over the island side into second place with a 4-1 against Athletic Bilbao.

Goals from Luis Figo, Luis Enrique and Patrick Kluijvert put Barcelona 3-0 up at half-time, with substitute Sonny Anderson restoring their three-goal advantage after Martin Cardetti had scored for Salamanca.

Real Madrid just managed to stay in touch with the leading group as they scraped home 3-2 against Real Zaragoza, thanks to Raul Gonzalez's injury-time winner, to give their new coach John Toshack his first win.

Results, page 4

Hamman tribute to retiring Jones

THE WIMBLEDON owner, Sam Hamman, yesterday paid tribute to Vinnie Jones after the decision by the game's foremost hard-man to retire. Jones, sent off 13 times in a controversial career both on and off the field, is hoping to become a Hollywood film star.

The 35-year-old midfielder's final club was Queen's Park Rangers, but he made his name as a leading member of the Crazy Gang at Wimbledon. He also played for Leeds United, Sheffield United, Chelsea and Wimbledon again. "I've decided to quit football. I've had enough of this game," said Jones, who starred in the acclaimed film *Lock, Stock And Two Smoking Barrels*.

Hamman said: "He was no Bryan Robson nor Paul Gascoigne but he had ability. He has been one of the characters of his football generation and people will be talking about Vinnie Jones for a number of years."

The Premier League have insisted that players will not lose out financially when they are on England duty. Premiership clubs are investigating a proposal by Sepp Blatter, the Fifa president, that they should be paid compensation by national associations when players are on international duty. This had led to concern from the Professional Footballers' Association over players losing out as their clubs would want a slice of the commercial spin-offs they pick up with England as compensation.

Prince Charles is to back England's bid to host the 2006 World Cup with a reception for leading football figures at his home of Highgrove. The dinner, to which the key decision-makers have been invited, will take place on FA Cup final weekend.

There were a number of additional spectators at Bramall Lane on Saturday, diverted from Barnsley's snowed-out FA Cup tie with Tottenham. These included journalists, Tottenham supporters and half-a-dozen weekenders. Icelandic fans but, though all should have enjoyed Sheffield United's attractive win over Watford, the most rewarding time will have been had by any Premiership scouts in the audience.

They will have returned to their clubs with two names to pass on to their bosses: Curtis Woodhouse and Lee Morris. Both 18 years of age, both in the England youth squad and both making an impact in the Nationwide League's First Division with Sheffield United.

They are long-time friends, having grown up together in the Yorkshire village of Driffield and in the club's youth teams. Woodhouse, the elder by 13 days, is a busy and perceptive midfielder; Morris, the son of former Blades and Blackpool winger Colin, is a forward. Together with Paul Devlin and the Brazilian Marcelo they destroyed a Watford side which had begun the day in sixth place, six points ahead of Sheffield.

Morris, previously played as a winger, was outstanding as a roving forward playing off Marcelo. Quick-footed and quick-witted he showed why he will be playing, today, for England Under-18s against Spain in a Uefa tournament. In a further indication of the need to resolve - at all levels - the ridiculous congestion of club

BY GLENN MOORE

Sheffield United 3
Watford 0

and international fixtures he may then be asked to play a part in Sheffield United's First Division match at Portsmouth tomorrow. Steve Bruce, United's manager, said he was reluctant to do so but added his team "desperately" needed Morris.

One suspects Bruce will rest Morris, but he has at least negotiated Woodhouse's release as part of the "deal" that sent Morris to Spain. While Morris has only recently come into the United first team Woodhouse has been in it all season and Bruce was even more loath to lose him. His performances against Arsenal in the FA Cup had underlined his promise to play in a wider role, he showed the same eye for a pass and pluck for a tackle as he had at Highbury.

Ideally both would play for England: such experiences are beneficial to young players. However, Bruce's priority has to be United's promotion attempt. They are now within three points of the play-off zone and, like a dozen teams in this tightest of divisions, approach the season's end with hope. "There are a lot of points to play for and it will go down to the wire," said Bruce.

He added: "Woodhouse has been terrific all season while Morris has his confidence back after suffering a bad ankle injury at the start of the season.

He posed them problems all afternoon."

Watford have their own young players but the most promising, Giffon Noel-Williams, was absent with injury. Without him their attack relied upon Tommy Mooney. He caused problems, but failed to score from a series of good chances.

Had he taken either of the brace offered after 15 minutes Watford may have won, both sides having come to the game with dwindling confidence.

United then scored three goals in 13 minutes. A sweeping move, from left-back to right-wing, led to Morris cleverly laying the ball back for Devlin to score a heavily deflected first. Then Morris scored a fine individual goal, shooting in from a tight angle. The third, driven in by Ian Hamilton after Alec Chamberlain had fumbled a cross under pressure from Marcelo, settled the points.

Neither club are flush with cash for strengthening but could, in a tight division, find their way into the play-offs. But promotion would necessitate heavy investment to avoid being followed by an instant return. More likely is a Premiership raid for the likes of Woodhouse and Morris.

Goals: Devlin (35) 1-0; Morris (44) 2-0; Hamilton (50) 3-0.

Sheffield United (4-4-2): Kelly (Tracy, 84); Derry, Sandford, Holdsworth, Quinn; Devlin, Ford (Vivas, 80), Hamilton, Woodhouse; Marcelo, Morris. Substitutes not used: Jackson.

Watford (1-4-2-3): Chamberlain; Bazeley, Ward, Palmer, Robinson; Wright (Gibbs, 52), Hyde, Hazen (Irons, 69), Kennedy, Smart (Smith, 55), Mooney.

Referee: R Pearson (Preston).

Bookings: United: Morris, Derry, Woodford, Robinson.

Man of the match: Morris.

Attendance: 15,943.

Leaders find it all far too easy

QUITE WHAT the Black Eagles, a posse of Tanzanian acrobats, made of their half-time performance in which they bounced and tumbled in only their loin cloths in the freezing, swirling, Weasdale rain is unknown, but it is clear that Sunderland are becoming increasingly foreign to the rest of the Nationwide League.

A slender home victory over a side in 12th place who have now won just one of their last 13 games may not seem like a gap of Continental drift proportions, but Sunderland were only required to play for about five of the 90 minutes.

The remaining 85 they practised five-a-side moves and silly step-overs while ensuring they did not get hurt in 50-50 challenges and did not tire themselves out. So exasperated did their captain, Kevin Ball, become with the apparent apathy around him, that he made three rash challenges on the hour and was booked. To save him further indignity he was immediately substituted.

But still Norwich failed to get a shot on target, although as Sunderland not so much rested on their laurels but fell asleep on them in the last 10 minutes they did at least keep the ball in the home side's half for a while.

Yet in those five minutes when Sunderland stretched themselves, they were magnificent. The goal came when ponderous possession up and down the line was broken by Chris Makin's quick killer ball into the feet of Darren Williams. Williams hack-heeled with foreign flair and Kevin Phillips despatched with unerring accuracy. One-nil and Sunderland knew the game was over.

BY SCOTT BARNES

Sunderland	1
Norwich City	0

They then only bothered with party pieces in purple patches. Allan Johnston lazily looped pit-point passes over the heads of defenders for fun and Phillips found his run with an acrobatic touch that the Black Eagles would have been proud of.

In the second half a Johnston drag-back in the slightest of space on the touchline presented Phillips with an open penalty area and, remarkably, Niall Quinn gathered his legs together for a back-heeled flick that fell immaculately into Michael Gray's stride. Nicky Summerbee slammed the resulting cross on to the outside of a post with a skimming half-volley.

Although Peter Reid made all the right noises about how his team, nine points clear at the top, were not becoming complacent as they equalled a post-war club record of nine consecutive home victories, his most telling phrase was about tomorrow's game against third-placed Bradford: "They are on a particularly good run and the players seem to be up for those sort of games."

In other words, Sunderland are in need of a challenge and Bradford notwithstanding, only the Premiership can provide it.

Goalkeepers (7): Sunderland (4-4-2): Sorenson, Makin, McCall, Suter, Gray, Summerbee, Williams, Ball (McCall, 63), Johnston; Phillips, Quinn, Sebastiansen (not used); Dudge, Briggs. Norwich City (4-4-2): A Marshall; Wilson, Fleming, Jackson, Fuglestad; Smith, Grant (Ruscoe, 60), L. Marshall, O'Neill, Bellamy (Llewellyn, 73), Roberts. Sebastiansen not used; McKay. Referee: O. Hughes (Warrall). Bookings: Sunderland; Sorenson, Ball. Butler, Norwick; Grant. Man of the match: Williams. Attendance: 39,004.



The Manchester City striker, Shaun Goater (left), holds off Northampton's Lee Howey at Maine Road. Empics

City slip back to mediocrity

THERE ARE headlines guaranteed to shock but nothing is more likely to have spoons dropped in cornflakes than "Manchester City hobbling along nicely, thank you". Catastrophe, calamity, unlucky, yes, but things going swimmingly at Maine Road? Come on.

But as the cock-up club entered this game there was the real prospect of good news. They were unbeaten in 10 league games and even automatic promotion from the Second Division seemed a possibility. Ninety minutes later and we were back in familiar territory.

Two points had been dropped at home against a club up to their necks in the relegation mire, the ninth City player had been sent off this season and anxiety that even the divisional play-offs could be missed was running rampantly round Maine Road's huge stands. The prodigal sons had returned to the disordered home. There to greet them was

BY GUY HODGSON

Manchester City	0
Northampton	0

City's manager Joe Royle who, if nothing else, has done a masterly job in buck-passing ever since he was appointed just over a year ago. Last season relegation was the fault of the previous manager, which neatly ignored that genial Joe was in charge for a third of it, while this time around we are constantly told the flame is fractions from the blue paper and just wait until control is made.

On Saturday it was the referee who got it in the neck. Royle was furious that Kevin Horlock had been sent off and went on an extensive tour of previous miscarriages of justice. "We're going to end up playing in tatus," he grumbled and for the first of the two bookings that added up to a red card he had a point as the Northampton players generously acknowledged, after-

wards. However, no amount of Mr. Messias-bashing could disguise that the official could have multiplied his mistakes by the power of 10 and still been lapped comfortably by the players.

City versus the Cobblers is an apt description of events over the last 20 years at Maine Road so perhaps we should not have been surprised at the poverty of what was being passed off as entertainment. It took a full 44 minutes for the first shot, a volley from Steve Howard that did not properly reward a perfect pass from Chris Freestone, by which time one press box wag had asked: "Why do they need a Junior Blues pantomime when they can watch this every week?"

To be fair, City improved enough for Royle to be able to assert correctly: "We dominated with 10 men so with 11 who knows?" and Billy Turley had to make two splendid saves from Michael Brown and Gareth

Taylor. Nevertheless, the impression left was of a team over-conscious of the consequences of failure.

Which is unnecessary because the script was written in many minds this season even before a ball was kicked. The climax involves City being 1-0 ahead with five minutes to go in the promotion play-off final at Wembley only to concede an own goal and lose on penalties. The hero of the opposition, the scorer of the winning kick, will, of course, be a former City player.

Ahhhhh, normality. It should be safe to return to that breakfast now.

Manchester City (4-4-2): Weaver, Crooks, Walters, Morrison, Edgill, Cooke, Brown, Beron, Horlock, Goater (Jickow, 62), Taylor. Substitutes not used: Tinto, Vaughan. Northampton Town (3-5-2): Turley; Sampson, Howey, Hogg, Gibb (Warner, 79), Sanger, Hunter, Parry, Train, Howard, Freestone (Corzoin, 72). Substitutes not used: Hill. Referee: M. Meegles (Nork). Sending off: Manchester City: Horlock (30). Bookings: Manchester City: Morrison; Northampton: Sampson, Howey, Warner. Man of the match: Gibb. Attendance: 27,999.

OUTSIDE EDGE A pate full of superlatives

LIKE MOST footy fanatics, I've always hung on to every word of players and managers. Lately, though, they've become about as unfaithful as one of Jorge Campos's goalies' jerseys.

I blame it all on this percentage effort business, you know. Nobody can make head nor tail of it. If I recall rightly in the good old, bad old days everything used to be plain sailing. Players and managers simply used to give their all. One hundred per cent effort and that was that. Game shot.

And now? Put it this way - I hear it's even got Carol Vorderman stumped. And there was a time when the poor girl could calculate the odds of a Stig Bjornebye cross reaching the far post to three decimal places. And still find time to laugh at a Richard Whiteley joke.

Not any more, though. They say it all started to go haywire about 10 years ago. Ironically, it's reckoned it was two of our esteemed old pros, Sir Bobby Charlton and Jimmy Greaves, who triggered it...

Guesting on Saint and Greaves, it seems Sir Bobby was asked by Greaves to estimate the extent of his own hair loss.

"Now then, Bobby, me old fruit, tell us all this then, me old cock sparra. How much of the old 'barnet' would yer say has vamoosed up the Great North Road since our own old England Under-23 days, then, eh mate?"

Overnight, the expression "110 per cent" was born.

Once unleashed, the phrase spread like baby oil on Sir Bobby's pate. Soon 110 per cent itself seemed scarcely sufficient to convey the players' efforts. Before long, even the likes of big Jan Molby and Matt Le Tissier were said to be cruising at levels of 140-150 per cent, making them fitter of foot than their counterparts from bygone eras.

Relativity in time and motion, they termed it.

Take big Jan himself. Ponderous to the naked eye, maybe. That, though, was a mere optical illusion. Compared with his predecessors, the guy was a gazelle. If not quite a blur, then certainly faster than Francisco Gento. Even carrying a crate of Heineken.

Confused? Then join the club. Nor was it any less bemusing down the other end of the pitch.

Take Willie Young. You remember Willie? Accused of bringing down Paul Allen in the 1980 Cup Final? Well, he never did. "That's right, you heard. Our Willie was innocent." The same relativity principle has now proven that at the time of the incident, he was, in fact, still disembarking from the Arsenal coach in the Wembley concourse. Evidently the last step alone took him 40 minutes to negotiate.

Now is that slow or is that slow? Bizarre, too, I'd say.

And it gets more bizarre the further back in time we go. An example? Try Paddy Cresswell. It now transpires Paddy was such a slowcoach he actually spent his entire career running backwards.

Can you credit it? And here's us thinking he always used to run sideways. And so, to today - and perhaps the most bewildering percentage of all, Kevin Keegan, it seems, has pledged to give 1,000 per cent as boss of England. That's right, one thousand per cent.

Astonishing, eh? And him only part-time, too.

Even more astonishing, though, is the effect Kevin's latest claim has had on Paddy Cresswell. Evidently, the poor guy was last spotted disappearing up his own backside in sheer desperation.

Mind you, given his chronic lack of pace, that's probably no bad thing, you know.

ALAN EDGE
Alan Edge is the author of 'Faith of our Fathers - Football as a Religion'.

Some joy for suffering Stoke

THEY MADE a major investment in the future at Blackpool last week: £4.95 for 500 polystyrene cups. Unfortunately there was nothing in the petty cash to pay for them, so they had to go back to the Cash and Carry.

It's a pathetic little parable that sums up the state of the club at present - and one reason why they found common cause with their visitors from Stoke on Saturday.

Hard-core supporters of the two sides decided that they shared more than Stanley Matthews, and organised a joint protest against the different manifestations of mismanagement that they perceive in their boardrooms.

All that it managed to prove on this showing was that the two of them could not put together a decent demonstration any more than they could a promotion-winning Second Division side.

The protest was as lethargic

BY DAVE HADFIELD

Blackpool	0
Stoke City	1

and ineffective as most of the play. Some black balloons rolled pointlessly around the pitch and both sets of fans chanted for their respective boards to depart.

It was as half-hearted as the football; a far more poignant moment was when a brave, if not foolhardy, Bloomfield Road DJ made an inspired choice of pre-match anthem - "We've got to get out of this place."

That sums up why the natives are restless in Blackpool. They were promised a new stadium and a bright future by a sometime chairman, the now incarcerated Owen Oyston.

Seven years ago he described Bloomfield Road as "a time-bomb", yet they find themselves still marooned in a crumbling ground supporting a

football team more likely to be sucked into relegation trouble than to make the Second Division play-offs.

Stoke have got the ground, but it has drained their resources to the point where the investment they needed to consolidate on their good start to the season has been snatched out of their reach.

Their manager, Brian Little, cried off the after-match questioning with a headache. The long-term cause of it is not difficult to diagnose; it must all look to him, as it looks to the supporters, like a scandalously missed opportunity. For all that, his side came away from Bloomfield Road with a result that puts them back within one place of the play-off positions, courtesy of Kyle Lethbridge's 33rd-minute goal.

It was not, though, a performance that had promotion written across it, even in the most discrete typeface. Stoke defended solidly enough, but

hardly managed another serious assault on goal.

"But they've pinched one today," said Blackpool's manager, Nigel Worthington, who had seen his side dominate possession without ever suggesting that they could turn that into goals.

"They've just got to put a bit of a run together and they're right back in it," he said.

The best Blackpool can hope for is to stay afloat in mid-table. As they could tell their equally disillusioned counterparts from the Potteries, it is really a question of whether your cup is half empty or half full.

Goals: Lethbridge (33) 0-1. Blackpool (4-4-2): Banks; Bryan, Carls, Butler, Hills; Cousins (Aldridge, 82), Hughes, Curson, Barnes (Jenn, 59), Nowland, Ormerod. Substitutes not used: Garvey. Stoke (4-4-2): Ward; Perry (Small, 65), Sigurdsson, Mohan, Woods, Short, O'Reid, Forsyth, Keen; Lethbridge, Grove (Wallace, 75). Substitutes not used: O'Connor. Referee: M. Dean (Warrall). Bookings: Blackpool: Curson, Hughes. Stoke: Mohan. Man of the match: Sigurdsson.

Sir Bobby mourns 'pal' Violet

SIR BOBBY CHARLTON yesterday said he had lost a "good pal" following the death of Dennis Violet, a fellow Busby Babe. Violet, who was 65, had been ill for some time.

The two former Manchester United team-mates were especially close because they both survived the Munich air crash of 1958. Sir Bobby, who last saw Violet at the 1997 European Cup final, said: "I've lost a good pal and he was a really, really good lad. I knew that he had been ill, but you tend to think that they will get over it. I'm just sorry this has happened and I feel so sorry for his family."

Sir Bobby recalled that Violet was a fine striker, who but for injuries would have won more than two England caps. He set the club record for most league goals in a season when he scored 32 times in 1959-60.

Obituary, Review, page 6

SNOW REPORTS in association with WorldCover Direct

SKI HOTLINE						
Resort	Area open	Comment	Slopes (cm) Lvr	Up	Last snow	Forecast
ANDORRA						
Pal	100%	Some good skiing	100	115	5.3	-4C Light snow
AUSTRIA						
Badgastein	95%	Excellent at altitude	60	160	5.3	32C Variable
Oberberg	95%	Great cover	80	280	5.3	-5C Mixed
BULGARIA						
Borovets	100%	Good	40	120	23.2	-1C Sunny
CANADA						
Jasper	95%	Packed powder	80	125	3.3	-18C Snow
FRANCE						
Gaube	95%	Good	100	195	4.3	-1C Changeable
S. Cheval	98%	Good higher up	40	80	5.3	2C Mixed
ITALY						
Bardonecchia	90%	Mezzet best	30	70	4.3	32C Light snow
Madonna di C.	90%	Good	80	120	5.3	0C Changeable
SCOTLAND						
Corran	90%	Plenty of cover	35	675	6.3	-2C Changeable
SWITZERLAND						
Devis	100%	Great skiing	175	310	5.3	-3C Changeable
Park City	100%	Packed powder	200	225	2.3	-4C Snow

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Irvine takes his chance at last

MOTOR RACING
BY DAVID TREMAYNE
in Melbourne

IT WAS the day when Formula One bordered perilously on farce, when the favourites were left by the roadside, and when Eddie Irvine finally came of age as a grand prix driver.

Taking the lead on the 18th lap, when Mika Hakkinen's dominant McLaren succumbed to mechanical failure, Irvine kept his head under persistent pressure from Heinz-Harald Frentzen's Jordan-Honda, and swept home to the first triumph for an Irishman since John Watson at Long Beach 16 years ago.

"To do this, with Ferrari, is amazing," Irvine said. "All weekend my engineer and I have been working away at our own thing. We made different choices from what other people were doing, and we were convinced that we were going the right way."

Along among the front-runners, Irvine chose the softer compound Bridgestone tyres, and where vaunted teammate Michael Schumacher yet again faced a start from the back row of the grid after problems selecting first gear on the grid, Irvine made a swift getaway to slot in behind the McLarens of Hakkinen and David Coulthard which had monopolised the front row.

After a dozen laps the McLarens, circulating one second apart, were more than 17 ahead of Irvine, who had Frentzen and Ralf Schumacher in the Williams dogging his wheeltracks. But then Coulthard swung dramatically into the pit garage, to retire.

"It was all going swimmingly," he said. "Obviously we were disappearing at a hell of a rate of knots. I was just sitting there comfortably, waiting for the pit stops to try and put a bit of pressure on Mika. But then something in the hydraulics, which control the throttle and the gearbox, stopped working and jammed me in sixth gear. Game over. Park it and get a suntan."

McLaren had their fingers metaphorically crossed, after persistent gearbox problems



Eddie Irvine soaks up the applause of his Ferrari pit crew and fans after crossing the line first in the Australian Grand Prix in Melbourne yesterday

Reuters

in practice, and what was to become a dark day had already got off to a shaky start, shortly before the grid formed. Hakkinen had driven out of his garage with diagnostic leads still plugged into his car, pulling the elaborate overhead lighting gantry down on to team chief Ron Dennis's head. The Finn had switched to the spare McLaren after his intended race car developed a misfire, but despite Coulthard's misfortune the world champion seemed comfortable nursing his lead. Then the complexion of the race changed on the 14th lap as Jacques Villeneuve's new BAR-Supertec lost its rear wing at top speed on the straight. The car slammed into the wall, and as the former champion climbed out, the safety

car was deployed while the wreckage could be removed.

When racing resumed three laps later, however, Hakkinen suddenly slowed and Irvine surged into the lead he would hold to the finish. The throttle linkage had malfunctioned, and Hakkinen was through.

This incident helped misfortune on the Stewart team, whose practice promise had threatened to evaporate in an embarrassing cloud of smoke as both Johnny Herbert and Rubens Barrichello's engines set fire to their bodywork as the field waited for the starting lights. That first start was aborted as the smoking machines were wheeled away. Herbert's day was over; but Barrichello had started the spare Stewart-

Ford from the pit lane and was in cracking form as he scythed back into contention. But as Hakkinen slowed the Brazilian was unsighted and unintentionally breached the regulations by overtaking Michael Schumacher before the start/finish line. Before long he had to serve a 10-second stop-and-go penalty, which killed his chances.

"When I saw the safety car I thought, 'Oh, the group will be all together so I have a good chance again,'" Barrichello said. "Mika had his problem and slowed. I was about the eighth car and I didn't have the vision to know what was going on. All of a sudden I saw cars everywhere trying to avoid something and I braked as hard as

I could because I knew if I overtook somebody before the line I would have a penalty. But then Schumacher braked even more than I did and I just couldn't avoid overtaking him."

On a day when the Stewart team might otherwise have won their first race, Barrichello had to be content with fifth place, after serving his penalty on the 32nd lap. "I'm upset because of what we could have achieved," Barrichello said afterwards. "For the first time I had a car that allowed me to race and overtake. It was one of the best races of my career."

Michael Schumacher, too, was out of luck. After moving up, the field he was delayed by a tyre problem on the 27th lap, and then the need to switch

steering wheels as his gear selectors played up. On a day when Damon Hill, in his 100th grand prix, was pushed off on the first lap, Schumacher counted himself fortunate to survive for eighth place.

The day indeed belonged to the man who has so often sacrificed his own aspirations for the good of Ferrari, and frequently been labelled a minnow for his pains. Frentzen couldn't get full throttle in the closing stages, and Ralf Schumacher lacked the sheer pace to challenge, leaving Irvine a clear and deserving winner.

"Apart from the two McLarens, which were so fast, we proved that we were doing the right thing," he said. "After such a long time this is fantas-

tic. There were a lot of things we had to improvise today, but I managed to remember them all and everything went well."

AUSTRALIAN GRAND PRIX (10 laps, 108.5 miles): 1. Eddie Irvine (Ferrari) 1:28.11; 2. Michael Schumacher (Ferrari) 1:28.11; 3. Rubens Barrichello (Ferrari) 1:28.11; 4. Jacques Villeneuve (BAR) 1:28.11; 5. Heinz-Harald Frentzen (Jordan) 1:28.11; 6. Ralf Schumacher (Ferrari) 1:28.11; 7. Damon Hill (Williams) 1:28.11; 8. Mika Hakkinen (McLaren) 1:28.11; 9. David Coulthard (McLaren) 1:28.11; 10. Johnny Herbert (Stewart) 1:28.11; 11. Pedro Pablo Kuczajski (Stewart) 1:28.11; 12. Jos Verstappen (Minardi) 1:28.11; 13. Nick Heidfeld (Sauber) 1:28.11; 14. Alexander Wurz (Benetton) 1:28.11; 15. Olivier Beretta (Benetton) 1:28.11; 16. Jean-Marc Gounon (Benetton) 1:28.11; 17. Marc Gené (Benetton) 1:28.11; 18. Jarno Trulli (Minardi) 1:28.11; 19. Andrea Montermini (Minardi) 1:28.11; 20. Luca Badoer (Minardi) 1:28.11; 21. Christian Klien (Minardi) 1:28.11; 22. Nicklas Nielsen (Minardi) 1:28.11; 23. Jos Verstappen (Minardi) 1:28.11; 24. Nick Heidfeld (Sauber) 1:28.11; 25. 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10/RACING

Third Arkle lures Johnson

SOME OWNERS spend their lives dreaming of having a runner at the Cheltenham Festival, even a 50-1 chance. David Johnson is not one of them. Thanks to Martin Pipe and an apparently bottomless bank account, he was the most successful owner in British last jumps season, and for him it is not a question of whether he will have a runner, but how many.

This year, Johnson may go to Gloucestershire with a chance in up to half a dozen of the meeting's 20 races, most notably the two novice hurdles and the Arkle Trophy, a race he has won for the last two seasons, with Champagne and Or Royal. Johnson said yesterday that Gris D'Estraval, an easy winner at Newbury on Saturday, will be this year's contender for the two-mile novice chasers' championship, a race for which he is 10-1. "He's come out of the race in fine form, I couldn't have been more pleased with him and the Arkle is the logical choice," Johnson said.

By GREG WOOD

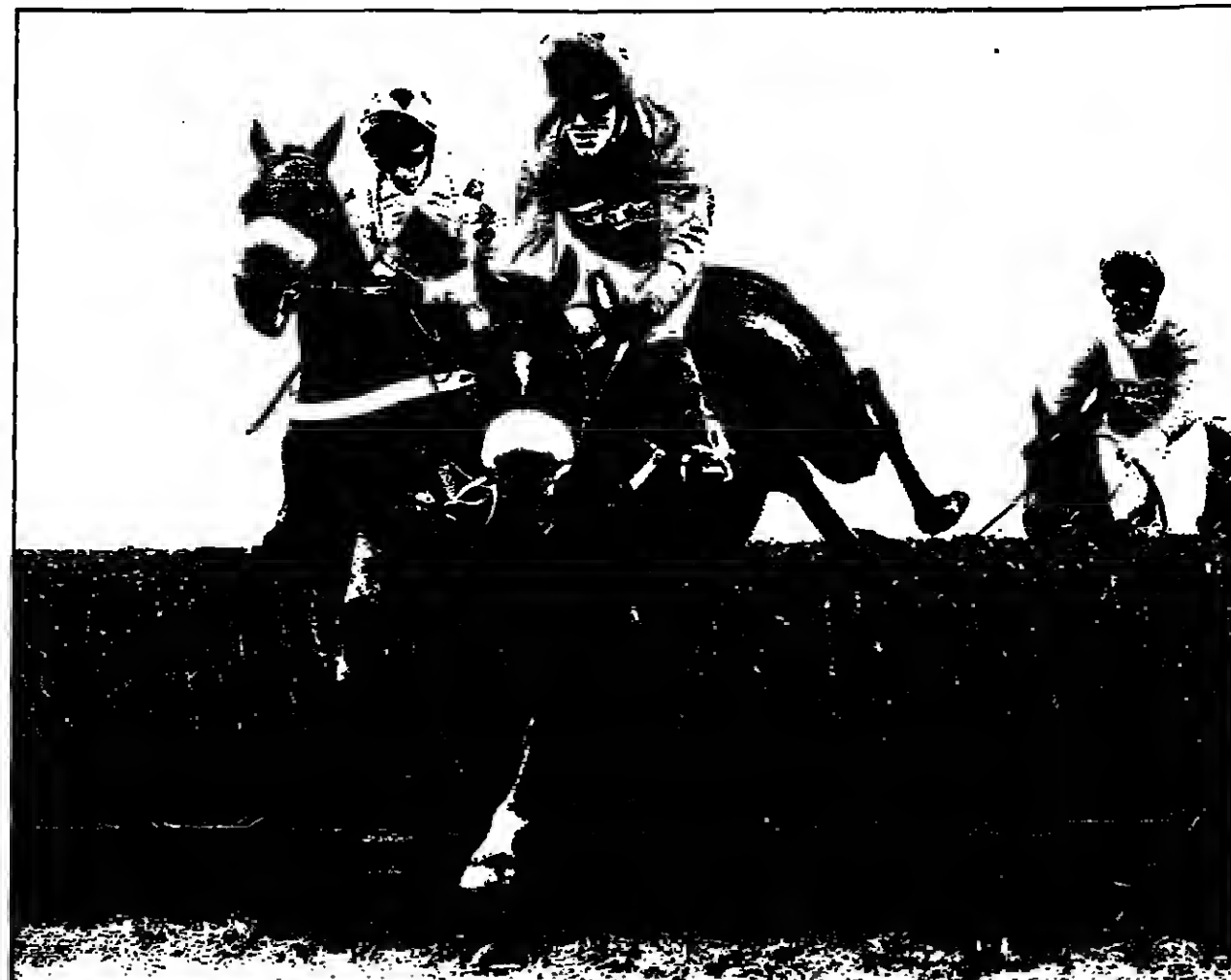
While Johnson and almost everyone else cannot wait for the drama to begin, it has sometimes seemed as if Mary Reveley would rather avoid the whole business. Though her string is one of the best in the country, she never sends many to the Festival and has never saddled a winner there.

But if there is still a gap in the trophy cabinet in a fortnight's time, for once it will not be for want of trying. Seven of her string could be running next week, which by her standards is a horde. Peter Niven will ride Wynyard Knight (Arkle), Brother Of Iris (Royal & Sun Alliance Novices' Chase).

RICHARD EDMONDSON
Nap: Desert Brave
(Musselburgh, 4.30)
NB: Rosey Boy
(Fontwell 4.50)

Johnson had a good afternoon at Newbury with Rash Remark winning a novice hurdle over two miles and five furlongs. Though his trainer hinted Cheltenham might come a little soon for him, Johnson said yesterday that he will now head for the Royal & Sun Alliance Novices' Hurdle over the same trip on Wednesday week.

"He seems a natural as he jumps so well," the owner said. "I was very pleased with him at Newbury and as long as it stays on the soft side he will go. He won by a distance at Haydock on his first outing for us the Saturday before, and yesterday he gave weight to some decent novices and beat them easily."



Gris D'Estraval (Tony McCoy) leads on his way to victory at Newbury on Saturday. Julian Herbert/Allsport

The field for the Gold Cup on Thursday was reduced by one yesterday when Earthmover was re-routed to the National Hunt Handicap Chase, on the opening day, by Paul Nicholls, his trainer. Ruby Walsh will be Nicholls' preferred rider in the absence of

the suspended Timmy Murphy. Escartefigue, though, remains on course for the Gold Cup, after David Nicholson, his trainer, dismissed suggestions over the weekend that he had suffered a setback.

Looking beyond Cheltenham to Aintree, Lord Gyl-

lene, the 1997 Grand National winner, is struggling to recover from a pulled muscle in time to attempt a repeat success. "He is still very sore and he is not coming along as well as we would like," Steve Brookshaw, his trainer, said yesterday. "We are doing some more tests so

we should know more this week."

Jamie Osborne will partner Ask Tom in the Queen Mother Champion Chase.

Tomorrow's hunter chase meeting at Leicester has been abandoned because of waterlogging.

FOR THE NOTEBOOK

HORSES TO GO ON TO BETTER THINGS

POINT-TO-POINT racing has never been more competitive and, on Saturday at Warwick Castle, Castle Mane reiterated the point in style with a fluent victory on his debut under National Hunt rules in the Town of Warwick Foxhunters' Trophy Hunter Chase.

The easy winner of all four of his point-to-points last year, Castle Mane has retained his unbeaten record between the flags and left clock watchers double checking their time pieces after impressive victories at Tweseldown and Brocklesby Park this year.

Dominating both races, the seven-year-old coasted home in times much faster than any other winner could manage on either card and Castle Mane's reputation is such that he was the 4-1 favourite with some bookmakers for the Foxhunters' Chase, the hunter chasers' Gold Cup, at the Cheltenham Festival a week on Thursday, before he had even run on a racecourse "proper".

Indeed the only question mark against Castle Mane prior to Saturday's contest was how he would handle regulation fences which, at a minimum of 4ft 6in, are generally a good six inches higher - and considerably stiffer - than most obstacles on the point-to-point circuit.

Castle Mane peaked on landing at the seventh-last fence and gave the third-last a bit of a clout, but had no problems with any of the other 16 fences in the 3½-mile contest - around a course which poses a relatively demanding jumping test - as he cantered to a bloodless nine-length victory.



Caroline Bailey, his trainer, who handled Trefon Mill with distinction before the grey went into the care of Vincent Williams towards the end of last season, said afterwards: "We'll be very tempted to go to Cheltenham as he hasn't had a hard race, but I just wanted to get one into him to see if everything was okay."

Dick Saunders, Bailey's father, who did punters such a favour when, as an amateur rider, he famously took the hazardous but ground-saving Fred Winter John from a route down the inner to guide (critic, the favourite, to victory in the 1982 Grand National, is confident Castle Mane will acquit himself well at Cheltenham.

Saunders said yesterday: "Castle Mane is a very straightforward horse and he did everything that was required of him at Warwick. He will have no trouble in staying the 16 fences in the 1983 St Leger up the hill at Cheltenham. The only problem is that they will go a much stronger pace in the Foxhunters'. However, he jumps well and the Foxhunters' looks a fairly open race this year."

Castle Mane can win the Foxhunters' and could be back for the Gold Cup in 2000. Ina Davies

SATURDAY'S RESULTS

NEWBURY
Going: Soft (Good to Soft in places)

1.45: 2m 110yds handicap (Class E) £2,500 added. 2m 110yds. 1. Greyhound (4th), 1.50. 2. Son Of Anthon (1st), 1.51. 3. Son Of Anthon (2nd), 1.52. 4. Son Of Anthon (3rd), 1.53. 5. Son Of Anthon (4th), 1.54. 6. Son Of Anthon (5th), 1.55. 7. Son Of Anthon (6th), 1.56. 8. Son Of Anthon (7th), 1.57. 9. Son Of Anthon (8th), 1.58. 10. Son Of Anthon (9th), 1.59. 11. Son Of Anthon (10th), 1.60. 12. Son Of Anthon (11th), 1.61. 13. Son Of Anthon (12th), 1.62. 14. Son Of Anthon (13th), 1.63. 15. Son Of Anthon (14th), 1.64. 16. Son Of Anthon (15th), 1.65. 17. Son Of Anthon (16th), 1.66. 18. Son Of Anthon (17th), 1.67. 19. Son Of Anthon (18th), 1.68. 20. Son Of Anthon (19th), 1.69. 21. Son Of Anthon (20th), 1.70. 22. Son Of Anthon (21st), 1.71. 23. Son Of Anthon (22nd), 1.72. 24. Son Of Anthon (23rd), 1.73. 25. Son Of Anthon (24th), 1.74. 26. Son Of Anthon (25th), 1.75. 27. Son Of Anthon (26th), 1.76. 28. Son Of Anthon (27th), 1.77. 29. Son Of Anthon (28th), 1.78. 30. 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THE INDEPENDENT
THE NOTEBOOK
ON TO THE FUTURE

'Big Supes' turns silver into gold

YESTERDAY EUROPE, today the world. Wins by Jim Baugh and Ashia Hansen on the final day of the World Indoor Championships here completed Britain's best ever performance in this event as the impetus of last year's European Championship success was maintained.

Taking in Colin Jackson's 60 metres hurdles victory on Friday, Britain's total of gold medals rose to three, one more than their previous best in the event. No other country won more golds here. And with additional bronze medals from the 400m relay and the 60m, where Jason Gardener broke Linford Christie's four-year-old European record, the team secured fourth place in the medals table.

Both Baugh and Hansen had won silver the last time these championships were held two years ago in Paris. Yesterday they went one better with impressive displays of self-belief.

One moment of decision as the runners broke from their lanes after 150 metres allowed Baugh to become the first Briton to win a global 400m title since Eric Liddell took the Olympic gold 75 years ago.

Having earned a favourable place in lane five as fastest qualifier, Baugh, who had started conservatively, swooped down from the banking and accelerated into the lead through a narrowing gap.

"Getting to the bell first is crucial indoors," he said. "If you don't dominate the race by then the chances are very limited. I knew I had to get in first, relax down the back straight and leave something left for the finish, and I'm just so happy that I did it."

His winning time of 45.73sec was slower than he had run as a 23-year-old in Paris, where he

ATHLETICS

By Mike Rowbottom in Maebashi, Japan

was overtaken in the final straight after starting too quickly. But his performance this time was that of a mature competitor.

Baugh gave much of the credit for that transformation to Christie, who has coached him for two years. "He has made an amazing contribution," Baugh said. "My mental power is so much better than it used to be. I wasn't scared this time like I had been in Paris. I'm better tactically now, and I kept my cool." Minutes after his victory, Baugh took a call on a mobile phone from Christie, who had set his alarm for 5.30 in the morning back home in Iwer Heath.

Grimacing like a satyr, the Welshman then announced that he had an additional title to world champion - "Big Supes." He explained: "Whenever Linford answers his mobile, he says, 'Yo, Big Supes' - Supes meaning superstar. He just called me that now, so I'm quite proud."

Big Supes II also anchored the relay team to a British record of 3min 32.05sec behind the United States and Poland, thus bringing his earnings for the day to \$52,266 (£32,600) - \$50,000 for winning the 400m and a sixth share of the \$15,000 given to the relay squad.

Much of the money will be ploughed straight back into his training for the outdoor world championships. After spending a week back home in Cardiff with his partner Suzannah and their four-year-old son, Jay, he will return for further warm weather work in Australia, where he had prepared for this championship.

Hansen's plans are also in fine shape after the disruption

of last year, when, after winning the European indoor triple jump title in a world record of 15.16 metres, she missed most of the summer with a heel injury.

An opening effort of 15.02 proved sufficient to defeat a field which included all her major rivals, although Iva Prandzeva, of Bulgaria, and Sarka Kasparikova, of the Czech Republic, came perilously close with jumps of 14.94 and 14.87 metres respectively.

As her lead narrowed, Hansen sat cross-legged beside the runway with every appearance of serenity. It was a false impression. "I may have looked cool, but I wasn't," she said. "My nerves were frayed."

"When Prandzeva jumped 14.94 I thought, 'God, that's enough to win it! I came here to break my world record so I'm a bit disappointed about that. But it doesn't matter how far I jump, I'll always be craving for more.'"

In the end, her tactic of putting pressure on her opponents right from the start paid off. Her next plan involved returning to her room to drink the champagne she had brought over from England. "I thought it would be good to drink if I won," she said. "And if I didn't, I could get plastered." It will no doubt have tasted sweet and hubbly.

Gardener, who failed to qualify for last year's European Championships, finally earned the kind of reward his talents merit with a 60m time of 6.46sec, 0.01 inside the mark Christie set in 1995.

The 23-year-old from Bath finished behind two Americans - world record holder Maurice Greene, who won in 6.42, and Tim Harden, who recorded 6.43. But Gardener felt he might have done even better if he had not, as he put it, "fallen out of his blocks".



Britain's Ashia Hansen is just a hop, step and a jump from the triple jump gold medal at the World Indoor Championships in Japan yesterday

Haile Gebrselassie, world record holder at 5,000 and 10,000m, emphasised his position as a peerless middle distance runner by adding the 1500m title to the 3000m gold he had won on the opening day. Nobody has matched that range of

achievement since 1928, when Paavo Nurmi, the Flying Finn, added the Olympic 1000m title to the 1500 and 5000m titles he had won four years earlier.

Steve Smith, making his international return after recovering from a serious neck injury, failed to clear his opening height of 2.25 metres. Javier Sotomayor, of Cuba, continued business as usual, a height of 2.36 earning him his fourth gold at these championships.

McGrath has the last word

CRICKET

By TONY COZIER in Port of Spain

Australia 269 and 126-2 West Indies 167

Glenn McGrath, who had initiated the West Indian demise in the last hour on Saturday, plucked out Merv Dillon's off-stump with a late in-swing in the day's opening over. It completed a collapse in which the last seven wickets fell for 18 and surrendered a match-winning lead of 102 to the combative Australians. By tea, delayed after two rain interruptions on a cloudy humid afternoon, they had extended their lead to 228, reaching 32 with opener Michael Slater, 62, and Mark Waugh, 33, well entrenched in a partnership already worth 81.

Dillon was McGrath's fifth wicket, the 12th time in his 46 Tests the New South Welshman has collected at least half the opposition wickets.

The batting failure was depressingly familiar for the West Indies. It followed captain Brian Lara's freak run out for 62, just as his dismissal led to the loss of the last eight wickets for 42 in their previous Test, against South Africa in January.

Once again, the West Indian bowlers were left with a thankless task of salvaging something from the match. They made an encouraging start, however. Courtney Walsh carried his tally

of Test wickets to 401 when he had the left-handed opener, Matthew Elliott caught at slip. Justin Langer was also a victim to an edged catch, to the wicket-keeper Ridley Jacobs, off Merv Dillon. But Slater and Waugh ensured there were no further set-backs.

Three days Australia won 100-0. McGrath took 15-100-0-0. McGrath took 15-100-0-0. McGrath took 15-100-0-0.

Flintoff provides platform

England A 350 & 288 President's XI 199 & 142-3

ENGLAND A can finish their tour of South Africa with another win, after resolute batting followed by a productive stint in the field yielded three vital wickets against the President's XI in Cape Town yesterday.

It was evident from the start of play that England intended to give themselves time in which to achieve a result. Andrew Flintoff, with a licence to attack, duly obliged. By mixing aggression with placement, he made it difficult to set a field.

Flintoff was out for 80 and England had set the President's XI 440 to win - a possibility which became even more unlikely when Steve Harmison took two early wickets.

Fourth day England A won 100-0. Flintoff took 3-100-0-0. Flintoff took 3-100-0-0.

Pakistan head for victory

Pakistan 398 and 314 Sri Lanka 328 and 60-0

WAJAHATULLAH WASTI became the third Pakistani to hit a century in each Test innings with an unbeaten 105 against Sri Lanka in Lahore in their Asian Championship game.

Set 385 to win, Sri Lanka made 60 without loss before light cut it off over the fourth day's play. Wasim Akram declared Pakistan's second innings at 314 for 8.

Pakistan won 100-0. Wasti took 100-0-0. Wasti took 100-0-0.

Offiah breaks English scoring record

RUGBY LEAGUE

by Martin Offiah added to his many rugby league achievements yesterday to become the top try-scoring Englishman of all time.

RUGBY LEAGUE RESULTS

League match. He is third in the all-time list after the Australian Brian Ewan (796 tries), and the Welshman Billy Boston (571).

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Phillips holds nerve to win first Tour title

GOLF

VAN PHILLIPS breathed a sigh of relief after surviving a nail-biting play-off to claim his first European Tour title at the Algarve Portuguese Open. The 26-year-old from Maidenhead took the first prize with a hole four on the first play-off after he had finished tied on a 12 under par total of 276 after eight rounds of 68, three ahead of the Swede Robert Karlsson.

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SOUTHWELL

HYPERION

1.40 Windshift 2.10 Prospector's Cove 2.40 Coppernick 3.10 Quizon City 3.40 Euro Vent (nb) 4.10 Scatbury 4.40 Lines-G 5.10 Mach One

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Pearn is Kerly's heir

HOCKEY

BY BILL COLWILL

There was no change at the top of the Premier Division as the leaders, Cannock, were held at Southgate and third-placed Canterbury went down at Reading, who nevertheless remain in fourth position. The day's surprising result was the 7-1 annihilation of Guildford by Teddington, whose player-coach, Brett Garrard, scored a hat-trick. And all that after Ian Jennings had given Guildford a second-minute lead.

There was a display of vintage Sean Kerly in the first half of Canterbury's game at Reading. The old campaigner set up Canterbury's first two goals for Paul Wicken and Stuart

HOCKEY

BY BILL COLWILL

Humphries as the visitors took a two-goal lead.

Reading claimed their way back, taking advantage of the temporary suspension of Canterbury's captain, David Hacker, to equalise. A brilliant solo goal by the player most likely to take over Kerly's mantle - Mark Pearn - put Reading ahead for the first time in the game. Pearn got a second and Scott Ashdown collected his brace as Reading took control in the last quarter of the game.

Results, Digest, page 9

Giants lead the pack

BASKETBALL

BY RICHARD TAYLOR

Derby, who face Giants in the Trophy Final without the banned Rico Alderson and Yerrick Williams, were also without their suspended coach, Bob Donewald, for Saturday's 77-66 defeat at London Towers.

Donewald will complete his latest two-game ban at home to Edinburgh Rocks on Wednesday night, in time for the final.

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SPORT

Gateshead's sterling start

RUGBY LEAGUE

BY DAVE HADFIELD

Gateshead 14
Leeds 24

GATESHEAD COULD not quite celebrate the opening of Super League's new frontier with a win over arguably the strongest side in the competition, but they went close enough to make it a sterling debut.

Leeds looked likely on occasion to run away with the match, but the Thunder showed great resilience in fighting back, only to be finally subdued by Francis Cummings' try in the last five minutes.

As if fate has not done enough to their plans in the shape of a clash with Newcastle United, the foul weather also conspired against Gateshead's efforts to get the new venture off to a flying start.

That had the predictable effect on the pitch, which was far too wet for their preferred style of rugby, and on the attendance, which was poor reward for all the work that has been put into this north-east outpost.

The sodden conditions even stopped the pre-match fireworks catching alight, although the game itself was anything but a damp squib.

Gateshead took the game to their visitors and Craig Wilson came close to registering their first Super League points when his drop-goal attempt was charged down. He was then indirectly responsible for the first points conceded by the Thunder when he stole the ball from Barrie McDermott to give Iestyn Harris a kickable penalty.

The first try to get past them was unlucky. Harris lost the ball in a tackle near the Gateshead line and it flicked up off the boot of Daryl Powell straight into Marc Glanville's arms, Harris compounding the ill-fortune with the conversion. Gateshead looked enterprising and made any number of half breaks but could not get



Danny Lee of Gateshead Thunder is brought to a halt by four Leeds Rhinos players last night

North News and Pictures

through the Leeds defence and began to make handling errors as they forced their passes.

They paid for the rough edges that were creeping into their play when a knock-on and two penalties moved Leeds from one end of the field to the other and Harris's dummy and dart for the line took him over. His kick continued Gateshead's

tough introduction to Super League, but two minutes before half-time they made their breakthrough. Will Robinson put in a cross-field kick that Leroy Rivett lost under pressure, allowing Craig Simon to claim their debut try.

The majority of a near 6,000 crowd that was respectable under the circumstances at last

had something to cheer. Four minutes into the second half there were almost two more points on the board. Ian Herron, who had missed badly with his conversion, hit the post with a penalty. All the same, Gateshead had an inkling that things might be turning in their favour when, in the space of minutes, Francis Cummings had a try dis-

allowed for Leeds and Simon took Willie Peters's long pass to scramble over for Gateshead's second.

Herron again hit the uprights to prevent Gateshead getting any closer than six points and then more trickery from Harris, with a forward pass to Powell, put them further in arrears.

Robinson's kick, taken by the leaping Matt Daylight, brought Gateshead back into it on the hour. Herron this time landing the goal from the touchline. Gateshead: Sammut, Herron, Grogan, Simon, Daylight, Robinson, Peters, Lee, Walters, Green, Wilson, Pritch, Glanville, McDermott, Rivett, S. Adcock, Maher, Hogg. Leeds: Harris, Rivett, Golden, Godden, Curran, Powell, Sheridan, Flouvy, Newton, McDermott, Hay, Farrell, Glanville, Sutherland, Schilling, Macdonald, Jackson, Skiffeld. Referee: J. Connolly (Wigan).

ACTION REPLAY

Arkle proves a real champion

In the spring of 1964, Arkle, the greatest steeplechaser of all time, won the first of three Cheltenham Gold Cups. Dick Francis, later to become a hugely successful author, was there to report the event for the Sunday Express.



IN ONE of the greatest Gold Cup races seen at Cheltenham for years, Arkle, from Ireland, beat Mill House, the English star, fairly and squarely by five lengths in record time yesterday. It left no doubt in anyone's mind as to which is the champion.

Never, even in the days of the great Golden Miller-Thomond II duel 29 years ago, has Cheltenham heard such cheering as Arkle forced his way to the front approaching the second last fence.

The cheering increased as Arkle passed the post on his own - and it continued until long after the horses had been unsaddled and had left the enclosure. Yes, it was a great day for the Irish.

The Walwyn stable as a whole seems to have struck an unaccountable bad patch, but this in no way detracts from the sizzling performance. Pat Taffie coaxed from the Irish challenger.

Up until the second-last fence the race was run just as I expected, with Mill House leading the other three horses at an even, fast gallop.

At the third open ditch - right in front of the stands - which Walwyn's fine chaser did not meet in his stride, there was little more than six lengths between all four runners.

But on going down the hill soon afterwards, Willie Robinson shot his mount forward, and after two more

BY DICK FRANCIS
at Cheltenham

jumps Mill House and Arkle started to draw away from Pas Senl and King's Nephew who were soon many lengths behind.

At the top of the far hill - just over half a mile from home - we all expected Mill House to increase his short lead over Arkle.

But Taffie had other ideas. Delaying his challenge until after jumping the second last fence, when it was soon evident what the result would be provided nothing untoward happened at the final one, he gradually drew away.

He raced home to an uproarious welcome in the new time of 6 minutes 45 3/5 seconds - four seconds better than the previous record set by Saffron Tartan three years ago.

Anne, duchess of Westminster, the owner, and trainer Tom Dreaper, were overjoyed, but Dreaper in his dry manner said: "I always thought he would win by five lengths and that is what he did."

He added that his great seven-year-old would next run in the Irish Grand National on Easter Monday.

Giving his impression of the race, Pat Taffie said: "Arkle is the best horse I have ever ridden and I was never anxious at any stage."

"I knew we had won it three fences out, when I was still behind."

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MONDAY REVIEW

COMMENT • FEATURES • ARTS • LISTINGS • TELEVISION

With his public school education, hand-made suits, dinners at Marco Pierre White restaurants and holidays in the Caribbean, who'd have thought Piers Stefan Pughe-Morgan would have ended up editing *The Mirror* (and not doing too badly either)?



THE
DEBORAH ROSS
INTERVIEW

Of, then, to meet Piers Morgan, editor of *The Mirror*, the youngest-ever national newspaper editor, and a bloke who, after the mighty clanger that was "Achtung Surrender", is now generally regarded as "a good thing". It's all a bit weird, I must say, because I used to know him ages ago, when he was running *The Sun*'s pop column, Bizarre, and I was a showbiz news reporter on the *Daily Mail*. We often had to attend the same events, where I would frequently distinguish myself by never recognising a news story until I read it elsewhere the next day.

"I know," says Piers, with an exasperated groan. "You were hopeless."

"You could have helped me out. You could have pointed me in the right direction every now and then."

"The thing is, I chose never to run with the pack. I was selfish. I did my own thing. I got more exclusives that way. Still, exclusives aren't what they used to be. We tend to put 'exclusive' on everything just to annoy other papers. I once even put 'exclusive' on the weather, by mistake."

He's a bright guy, and I like him, and he makes me laugh (mostly). He is shortly off to guest-edit an issue

of *Cosmopolitan*. I ask him what sort of pieces he's going to commission. How to have six orgasms and a power breakfast while elbowing down the rubbish in the kitchen bin, perhaps? He says he read the magazine for the first time the other day, and "bloody hell, I had to drink a pint of bromide afterwards. There was a feature, he says, "on 100 ways to please your man, and I thought, three of these would be enough for me..."

I think few doubt that Piers is sharp enough. Or ambitious enough. ("All journalists should be ambitious. I want all my staff to want my job.") Or egocentric enough. But is he the right guy for *The Mirror*? I'm just not sure. But that's OK, because I don't think anyone else is, either.

Anyway, we meet at his office on the 22nd floor at Canary Wharf Tower. A big man, with a big face and small eyes and highly-polished, black shoes, he dashes in a few minutes late. He says he's sorry but it's his wife's birthday on Monday and he had to rush out to buy her a card. He has already bought her a present, yes. And? "It's a trouser suit from Joseph. A light grey, creamy sort of thing." How lovely, I sigh enviously. For my last birthday, I tell him, my loved one bought me a plastic nose on which to keep my spectacles. "God. If I bought that for my wife, she'd shoot me," he cries happily.

He gives me a tour of the newsroom and I get a

quick run-down on tomorrow's main stories. The first interview with an American woman whose estranged husband injected their baby with Aids, so he didn't have to pay maintenance. "A great story." The continuing serialisation of Andrew Morton's *Monica's Story*, which Piers bought for £50,000, and which has attracted "an extra 300,000 readers a day". An update on baby Brooklyn. "A fantastic story for us. We're saying it's good Posh didn't conceive in Peckham, because then the baby would be Peckham Beckham. I say it's good we don't all have to name our children after the places where they were conceived, because my own son might have found it cumbersome going through life known as A Quickie on the Back Seat, Just Outside The Dog & Duck."

He introduces me to one of the long-standing feature writers while he strides purposefully off to do something else. The writer says Piers "is the best *Mirror* editor ever, and he's very kind. Just look at his face. It's as open as a frying-pan". Piers later says that, as an editor, you must be able to "ride rough-shod over the slings and arrows".

A successful newspaper must have a clear identity, and that identity must obviously come from the editor. But is Piers Morgan *The Mirror*? And what is *The Mirror* now, anyway?

Everyone seems to have a firm idea of what *The Mirror* once was. It was, they say, a great, left-leaning, compassionate, campaigning newspaper. It was Paul Foot and John Pilger and lots of hiking through Cambodia. Possibly we have always overrated this period in the paper's history, but, even so, its identity was constructed for many years around a passionate concern for social issues, while giving a voice to the working classes. I think this is what Piers thinks he ought to regain.

He does not, frankly, strike me as one of *The Mirror*'s natural constituents. I'm not, here, referring to his salary - "What do I get? More than the Prime Minister..." or his flashy chauffeur-driven Jag or Merc or whatever it is. These things go with the job. No, what I am referring to are his basic values. His politics. His lifestyle.

His first editorship, at 23, he's now 33 - was on Rupert Murdoch's extremely right-wing *News of the World*. Although he now describes himself as "New Labour-ish", he used to be a big fan of Thatcher. "It's heresy for a *Mirror* editor to admit it, but I did vote for her, yes." He's an ex-public-schoolboy who intends to dispatch his own two sons - Stanley, two, and Spencer, five - to private schools at some point.

He has a tailor visit him here, in his office. "He brings shirts, cloth, shoes, everything..." He lives with his wife, a ward sister, in a big house in Wandsworth, south London. He holidays in the Caribbean, "usually somewhere I've booked at the last minute, at great expense". He likes Marco Pierre White's restaurants "because he always brings out a £3,000 bottle of desert wine. He's a card." I'm not sure he's ever had deep concerns about the NHS.

I think he thinks that he connects with his readers on the terraces. He is mad for Arsenal, he says. "If you asked me what would be worse, getting sacked, or Dennis Bergkamp breaking both legs and never being able to play again, then I'd say Bergkamp breaking his legs."

Continued on page 8

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PEN-PUSHER?

CARRY ON.

WORK, REST OR PLAY

IN OUR BUSINESS CLASS LOUNGES.

British Midland
The Airline for Europe

Town hall cabals

Sir: In publicising the threat to democracy from Labour's town hall "reforms" (letter, 5 March) Councillor Margaret Little has done your readers a great service. Does the Government really think the Westminster system – secretive, confrontational and antiquated – has been such a huge success that "cabals" should be foisted on councils throughout the land?

My own authority recently tried out the new ideas in a day-long role-play arranged by the Local Government Management Board. It swiftly became apparent that our seven-strong "cabinet" (drawn from all three political parties) was seriously overloaded: scrutinising the cabinet's operations effectively was difficult or impossible, and back-bench councillors were set to become as marginalised as their hapless counterparts at Westminster.

The result of these changes is likely to be a further exodus of capable people from local government. All parties find it hard to recruit candidates to serve as councillors at the moment, and the new system will worsen the problem. If power is to be monopolised by cabals of officials and senior councillors, the rest will have little incentive to serve as lobby-fodder (unpaid) and may seek other ways of serving the community.

Councillor ALAN HAYMAN
Chairman,
Public Protection Committee
Colchester Borough Council
Colchester, Essex

Sir: I share Councillor Margaret Little's concern. The creation of a mayor or leader with a small "cabinet" of senior councillors will lead to the formation of oligarchies to which promotion is likely to be by patronage, and where the influence of the remaining councillors will be small.

Additionally, there is no mention in the Government's proposals of either town or parish councils. I suspect that this primary level of local government will be left to wither and in time to disappear.
HARRY CUNLIFFE
Member, East Hampshire District Council
Waterlooville, Hampshire

Europe vs America

Sir: Several of your correspondents on the subject of the euro are at last getting to the heart of the matter (letters, 4 March). The issues are sovereignty and national identity, but not in the way that the tabloid press and the Tory party see them.

British sovereignty has been an illusion since 1945. British governments have been in hook to the USA ever since, both politically and economically. However this is dressed up, whether as the "special relationship" or pragmatic Antilleanism makes little difference. Britain is allowed to cultivate all the trappings of sovereignty – the monarchy, the pound and a thousand-year history – but it dances to the American tune.

But what really saddens me is the way in which our values and culture are being eroded by global (read American) culture and values. I often wonder how many of those who cheerfully sport casual wear bearing the words USA or the American flag are also opposed to the European Union and the euro. The only way to establish the realistic sovereignty we are entitled to as a medium-weight power, to protect our way of life and culture, is to join with other vigorous, culturally independent and proud nations in a further integrated Europe.

Can we stop pretending?
PETER J KENNEDY
Northampton

Sir: W H White contends that the case for an early referendum on EMU is compelling because, in its absence, the next general election will, perforce, become the referendum (letter, 5 March).

I think this view is mistaken. The next election will be decided on a record of the Government on a

range of policies and on the "voter appeal" of the main figures of the Labour and Conservative parties. The odds are against a narrowly based Conservative Party led by Hague or Portillo overturning the huge government majority.

A second general election victory will enormously strengthen the Government's hand in recommending EMU to the country.

In the same issue J W Smith of the UK Independence Party states that it is the pro-federalists (I hold up my hand) who will benefit from the intervention by Lord Owen and his New Europe movement. I do not quite follow the reasoning, but it does seem that the various anti-euro groups have become a sort of outdoor relief for superannuated politicians in search of an audience. They are welcome to them.
GRAHAM PERKINS
Bromyard, Herefordshire

Sir: I was amused by W H White's statement (letter, 5 March) that the Conservatives "have a clear position (on Europe) and which is popular with the public".

In June, they will be asking us to vote for them, so they can take their seats with the European People's Party group in the European Parliament. Here is an extract from the EPP website:

"The transition to the euro will permit greater prosperity, new markets will be opened up and the consumer will be the main ultimate beneficiary... The euro will give them the opportunity to increase their business."

How can they stand on an anti-European platform at home and join that very pro-European group in Brussels?
JOE MCNAMEE
Brussels

Uganda massacre

Sir: In using the text from the note attached to one of the bodies in the dreadful Uganda massacre (report, 5 March), your correspondent Lucy Hannan gives a misleading impression of the killers.

The note has been misread. A correct translation is: "This is the punishment of the Anglo-Saxons who have sold us (down the river). You are protecting the minority and oppressing the majority." (She saw *vous* where *vous* is written).

Moreover, the language is not "schoolboy French". It is language written by an educated person aware of the intricacies of French grammar. All the endings and agreements which many students (and native speakers) of the language find so challenging are correct. The only anomaly is the elliptical *Vous* *puniton*, which is missing a "le" before the noun.

Your report may thus suggest that the perpetrators were uneducated brutes. The written evidence suggests they were intelligent, calculating, cold-blooded murderers.
PAUL HICKMAN
Lymington, Hampshire

Sir: I was horrified by Dulcie Powell's lack of compassion for the victims of the massacre in Uganda and their families (letter, 6 March). Personally, I regard being hacked to death by a gang wielding machetes with the aim of bringing

Sir: David Aaronovitch (Comment, 2 March) omits one very important attribute of British racial prejudice: condescension. The British do not hate foreigners; they feel sorry for them, for not being British. Being neither black nor Jewish, I have not experienced the most rabid form of prejudice. In most cases I am looked upon with puzzled amusement and surprise that there are indeed Italians who are not in the catering or ice-cream business!
SERGIO VICIGIANI
London SW2

Sir: Yasmin Alibhai-Brown, giving sound reason, claims "Every mixed race marriage is

their cause to the world's attention as a sign of just how evil human beings can be, rather than an "unpleasant consequence" of foreign travel.
ANTHEA ROWE
Lancaster

Owners of the land

Sir: Knoydart and Balthos represent further plurality of tenure which is welcomed by the Scottish Landowners' Federation and I am sure everyone will wish the enthusiasm and imagination of those concerned to be rewarded by success, both in the short and longer term ("Mystery gift to Knoydart fund puts estate in settlers' hands", 3 March).

As taxpayers we all have a stake in Knoydart and it will be interesting to learn in due course the extent of the precedent now established and how the Secretary of State justifies the "last brick in the wall" where special cases are concerned.

At the same time the SLF will wish to ensure that market forces are not so compromised as to deter the entry of new private capital into Scotland, especially on

account of emerging proposals now rendered even more incomprehensible given that Knoydart and Balthos were achieved without recourse to statute.

There may well be further buy-outs. In the meantime we shall be recommending landowners and local groups to seek opportunities for co-operation to their mutual benefit in line with our draft code of practice instead of looking to legislation which, it is becoming increasingly clear, is neither wanted nor needed.
ANDREW DINGWALL-FORDYCE
Concener
Scottish Landowners' Federation
Edinburgh

Sir: The readers of Historical Notes on 1 March ("Private property is a public asset too") learned that "landowners have been gradually forced to accept... public footpaths". This is incorrect for the great areas of Midland England which were subject to Enclosure Acts.

In the case of Flore parish the Act of 1778 made provision for various public and private rights of way, including footpaths "and that

it shall not be lawful for any Person or Persons, after the setting out of such new Roads or Ways, to use or claim the Use of any Roads or Ways, either public or private, through the same new Inclosures or Allotments, or any Part thereof, either on Foot or with Horses, Cattle or Carriages".

Though there were some objections to the Enclosure Acts the process was democratic and expensive. The landowners had their say, and often wanted the footpaths to allow their workers to get to work.

No doubt as agriculture declines and the land goes to waste, more liberal access will be legalised. Meanwhile Marion Shoard has no right to roam and should stick to the footpaths. If she wants to go off the paths to get a better photograph she can ask permission.
JOHN M SMITH
Secretary
Flore Heritage Society
Flore, Northamptonshire

No male feminists

Sir: Robert G Brew objects to Germaine Greer's implication that men cannot be feminists (letter, 5 March). However, the desire to exclude men from the definition of feminist is perfectly understandable.

Women's lives have been and continue to be colonised and controlled by men. The notion of the male feminist can be seen as a continuation of this colonisation. How long before men insist that they can do feminism better than women can, just as the literature on transsexualism sometimes implies that surgically produced four women can do womanliness better than women can?

Call yourself a critic of gendered power relations by all means, Mr Brew, but consider the message that is conveyed by men laying claim to feminist status. Dr ADRIAN COYLE
Department of Psychology
University of Surrey
Guildford

Polite applause

Sir: I read with great amusement Philip Hensher's piece on acceptable behaviour at Parsifal ("It's all over when the fat bloke snores", 5 March). He mentions that one isn't supposed to applaud at the end of the first act.

I can remember the days when applause was not permitted even at the end of the performance. Then, about 30 years ago, Convent Garden decided that applause at the end would be permissible and I was present at the first night of this great innovation. At the end of the performance the cast came before the curtain looking duly solemn and bowing very slightly at our decorous clapping and shouts of "Bravo" or anything so shocking.

The following morning in *The Times* there was a furious piece by their then critic William Mana and I was astonished to read that the audience, had behaved "like teenagers at a Beatles concert".
JOAN NEARNS
Morborough, Wiltshire

Sir: It is a pity that Philip Hensher did not take the trouble to check his facts before bursting into print with yet another media piece lampooning opera. Had he done so, he would have learnt that the "snorer" was a patron suffering from severe breathing difficulties, who had to be carried from the stage box to receive emergency treatment.
MAGGIE SEDWARDS
Director of Public Relations
English National Opera
London WC2

Sir: Philip Hensher comments on snoring during Parsifal. Yes, this production is certainly different, but is not boring!

I am neither stuffy nor elitist, but my idea of heaven is attending an opera performance unmarred by rustling sweets, retrieving tissues from handbags, (get them ready beforehand!) and, far worse, constant chattering and fidgeting. If this seems impossible for some people, I respectfully suggest that they view opera videos at home, or find another activity to which they are better suited.

All producers, I am sure, wish their audiences to see and hear clearly, whether a modern or a traditional production.
JUDY COOK
London N3

Definitions of death

Sir: I have been following the debate on organ transplants in your letters column with interest.

The popular perception has always been that before the start of organ retrieval the ventilator would be switched off and that the heart, starved of oxygen, would consequently cease to beat. Death, as the public understands it, would occur before the first incision. Clearly that is not so.

The man or woman who signs a donor card is not told that "after my death" is held by those who will accept his or her offer as meaning "after I am beyond recovery". In his mind there is a vast difference between being doomed to die and being a corpse, so many consents have been fraudulently obtained.
ESME M S THOMPSON
Hampton Wick, Surrey

And finally...

Sir: Would somebody please explain to me why moving a television news programme, however worthy from one part of the evening to another constitutes something approaching a national crisis?

I have read the agonising over the move of *News at Ten* with growing incomprehension. Now I read in your leader of 6 March that "the ending of *News at Ten*... is a real threat not only to our cultural life but to our democratic citizenship". Does that mean that I will not be able to vote in the next election, or that moving the news will result in Britain becoming a totalitarian regime? Or could it be that the media have become obsessed with their own importance?
PETER J SCHEUER
London NW11

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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National Orchestra Week No 1: Pierre Boulez, about to conduct the Philharmonia Orchestra, with the mezzo-soprano Michelle Deyoung David Rose

IN BRIEF

building a better Britain" (Comment, 4 March) while Alex Woolf (letter, same date) comments on the inability of journalists to "distinguish between 'race' and 'ethnicity'". My father is of an Asian and my mother of a European ethnicity. I prefer "mixed race" to "half-caste", but consider "compound ethnicity" more appropriate and accurate. The components of a mixture undergo no chemical change, whereas chemical bonds are involved in the formation of a compound. If I am a mixture, who determines which parts are from which parent? Is my

leg from Punjab and my arm from Norfolk?
DAVID DEAN
Leigh, Lancashire

Sir: Deborah Orr (Comment, 5 March) states lung cancer kills around 120,000 people each year and then goes on to write: "If we can't work out how to turn people off from cigarettes, then we're not going to stamp out other and more serious drug abuses either." What are these more serious drug abuses? Does any other drug cause such a seriously high mortality rate? Perhaps she really means less socially acceptable drug abuses.
DAVE HASTINGS
London N22



MILES KINGSTON

A group of children in a village in Portugal claim to have seen Monica Lewinsky in a vision

General's body extradited to Spain, where he may well have to go on trial posthumously

Is it news or nonsense? You, the public, can now decide

HOW CLOSELY do you follow the news? Did you know, for instance, that *News at Ten* is no longer called that, but is now *News at Some Other Time*? And that it has been replaced by a new programme called *Some Dreary Old Movie With Lots of Advertising Revenue Capability*? Did you know that the BBC has a 24-hour news service called *Yes, Sir John, No, Sir John, Three Bags Full, Sir John*? Did you know that when Lord Denning died, more than 75 per cent of people had no idea he had still been alive?

If so, you are well prepared to enter our great news quiz, the first of 1999. All you have to do is study the following news stories (of which one is true) and decide, using skill, memory, luck and sense of smell, which one is the true one.

1. Keith Waterhouse has a new play on the road called *Bing Bong*. As you might expect from the title, it is all about the demise of *News at Ten* and the surprise appointment of Trevor McDonald as the new Poet Laureate. Criticism of the move, on the grounds that Trevor McDonald has never written a poem in his life, are countered by revelations that, from now on, the Poet Laureate will not be required to write any poetry as such, only wander aimlessly from bar to bar in Soho, reminiscing about Jeffrey Bernard and the good old days.

2. A group of children in a small village in Portugal claim to have seen Monica Lewinsky in a vision. She appeared to them for three minutes, and told them that they should be good boys and girls, and

never go to the big city, and that if they did, they should never be in the same room alone with an important personage, and that if they were unable to avoid it, they should at least have a tape recorder running. She then sold them a copy of the Andrew Morton book, and vanished.

3. The reason that nothing much has been heard on the General Pinochet front for a little while now, is that General Pinochet died in his rented house in England two weeks ago, and the whole thing has been kept extremely hush-hush. The British Government has not been quite sure what they should do about this new situation, knowing that the news that the late dictator died while in British hands will cause grave uproar in Chile. They have now decided to have the late

high-flying group of City operators, including Jeffrey Archer's son James, who were fired for breaking City regulations.

The name "Flaming Ferraris" came from the name of their favourite cocktail. Archer's son is now following his father's advice to bounce back from disaster with a best-seller, by writing a new cocktail recipe book which includes such concoctions as "Lord Mayor's Folly", "Like Father, Like Son", "Victoria Station Virgin", "Spotty Back", "Granchester Gamble", and "Flaming Plagiarism".

5. After the Millennium Dome has been in use for a year as a Millennium Dome, it will be sold to McDonald's Hamburgers and used as the biggest burger outlet and take-

away place in Europe. They reckon the smell of frying will be noticeable as far away as Maidstone, and the trail of litter could reach as far as Dover.

6. Bath Football Club, home of Bath's famous rugby football team, wants to build a new stand on their ground next to the river Avon. However, the terms under which they have the land forbid them to build any more permanent structures. They intend to get round this by building a new stand with a flat roof that will retract into the ground when not in use, and as the flat roof will have turf on it, the top of the stand will then merge into the surrounding playing field. How they will stop the Avon and the water table filling the stand with water when underground has not

been explained. Local wags claim that the new stand will be used to house visiting opposition fans, who can then be lowered out of sight as and when necessary.

ANSWER: I am afraid the quiz was not very hard this week as, clearly, the only true one was the one about Madeleine Albright, Robin Cook, the seven dwarfs and the big inflatable banana. No, as you were – the lawyers decided I couldn't use that one.

So it must have been the one about Bath Football Club. A pity as I really wanted to use the two stories I also came across, headlined "Driver Killed By Flying Cow", and "Player Murdered By Referee", which were both absolutely genuine, but which I feared you might not believe.

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You don't need any gimmicks for a good budget, Chancellor

"NO MORE on tobacco; a penny on beer; something on dogs and pools, but not on horses; increase in purchase tax, but only on articles now taxable; profits tax doubled." Hugh Dalton's hurried leak of the main points of his 1947 budget mattered because the measures were immediate: they had a direct impact on people's lives within days.

Today, budgets and budget leaks are very different. All the important government decisions about the next financial year have already been taken. We know that tax on cigarettes and petrol will go up, child benefit will be increased, and the burden of National Insurance contributions will be shifted up the income scale, because they were announced last year. Gordon Brown's purpose when he rises to speak tomorrow, apart from fine-tuning policy over the next three years, is largely presentational.

Not that this is necessarily a bad thing. The Chancellor can reasonably argue that he and his colleagues are engaged in a major overhaul of the tax system, and have begun a series of significant changes in the management of public finances, but that it requires a high occasion like the Budget to focus people's attention on the wider picture.

Equally, the practice of using the budget to announce changes one or two years in advance, or permanent "escalators" such as the annual increase in petrol duty, has developed since Dalton's day. And that is a good thing, since it allows government and businesses to plan ahead further than 12 months.

Where the Government has a problem is that budget leaks are also largely presentational too, in that they are more to do with the airworthiness of kites and the adjusting of expectations than they are to do with the contents of the Budget itself. Moreover, one reason why the big picture is so cloudy is because the Government has tried to take credit for things before they happen. The £40bn extra for health and education, for example, does not begin to be spent until next month - and then it is spread over three years. In real life, we are still in the two-year alleged squeeze imposed by sticking to "Tory spending limits".

Sadly, the Conservative party continues to fail the public, as the official Opposition is still the last place the honest voter would turn to for the truth about how his or her taxes are spent. The fuss William Hague's student politicians made last week about the Prime Minister's admission that "the tax burden will increase over this Parliament" was extraordinary, given that Tony Blair's sentence continued "at or below the level predicted by the Conservatives in their last budget".

It is left to Malcolm Bruce of the Liberal Democrats to provide the only serious critique of Mr Brown's stewardship. Mr Bruce is right to point out that Labour is too driven by presentational needs. The idea of a 10p-in-the-pound start-



Supporting feudalism is a step into the past

THE EMIR of Bahrain, Sheikh Isa bin Sulman al-Khalifa, dies. His eldest son, Sandhurst-trained and American educated, the 49-year-old Prince Hamad, takes over without a ripple of discontent. We should all be relieved.

Or should we? Just as in Jordan, Britain and America are committed to supporting a royalist succession from the military, with never a nod in the direction of the pluralism and democracy which we are so busily demanding of Iraq. It's a course that suits our purposes in Bahrain, where we need the Gulf bases for our aircraft and our ships. But is it a course that suits the Middle East, and our own long-term interests?

As the price of oil falls, straining the finances even of Saudi Arabia, let alone Bahrain, and as Islamic militancy rises, the feudal ways of absolute rulers are becoming less and less

sustainable in the Middle East. Even less defensible in popular eyes are regimes that support the relentless Anglo-American bombing of Iraq - made all the worse by the arbitrary change in the rules of engagement in the no-fly zones of northern and southern Iraq.

Acclaiming the succession of another pro-Western royal ruler in the Gulf is not an acclamation of the future, but a step back to our colonial past.

Lib Dems need a fight

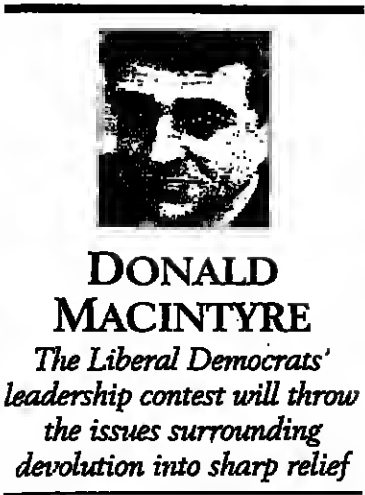
SO, FAREWELL, then Paddy. You are off. But not yet. His parting gift to his party is a huge missed opportunity. What the Lib Dems need above all is media coverage, and they could have had it. All they needed was a knock-down, drawn-out, lip-splitting leadership contest. The paparazzi would have been camped outside Jackie Ballard's door. David Rendel would have been as much a household name as David Beckham. And the party would have shot up in the opinion polls.

Can a Scottish politician lead a UK party in the era of home rule?

AT 3.30PM tomorrow the British Chancellor will rise in the House of Commons to deliver his third budget, a statement of profound importance to the entire UK economy. Gordon Brown is 48 and at the peak of his powers. There is on reason to suppose that when, at some point, Tony Blair decides to stand down as Prime Minister, Brown would not be a candidate, perhaps easily the front-running candidate, to succeed him. After all, James Callaghan, another (to judge by Brown's performance so far) much less successful chancellor, succeeded Harold Wilson, a politician of his own generation, in 1976. Indeed this was a point that Callaghan himself made to Brown when he wrote him a graceful letter after Brown announced he was not standing for the party leadership in 1994.

No reason, that is, except one. Which is that because Brown sits for a Scottish constituency, and because the Scottish Parliament will, by the time the Labour leadership becomes an issue, have been running for several years, there will, so the argument goes, no longer be an appetite in England for a Scottish prime minister. So many issues, from health to education, from local government to law and order, will be decided not by the UK Government but by an executive answerable to the Scottish Parliament, that Brown would either have to transfer to an English seat or give up any hopes of the premiership.

This is a deeply controversial doctrine, advanced, nevertheless, by some people in New Labour as if it were obvious. It has seldom been



DONALD MACINTYRE
The Liberal Democrats' leadership contest will throw the issues surrounding devolution into sharp relief

is. The rest of the candidates fall into two other camps: those broadly in favour of the "project" of close co-operation with Labour, but not of a Kennedy leadership - Don Foster and Nick Harvey, who for reasons of ambition have unceremoniously dumped his once highly Eurosceptic views; and those broadly against Kennedy and the so-called "project" - Simon Hughes, David Rendel, Jackie Ballard and Malcolm Bruce.

Nevertheless, the candidates with easily the most attractive and highest profiles among voters outside the party are both Scots: Kennedy and Campbell. Kennedy is something of a media star who can claim an honoured place in the party's history by having boldly - as an SDP member in 1987 - fought his way out of Dr David Owen's clutches to back a merger with the

Liberals, while Campbell is a QC and former Olympic sprinter who has a wealth of experience, especially in foreign affairs.

Given that their most serious opponents are English, it would be surprising if their Scottishness did not become an issue once the campaign gets openly under way after the European elections in June - especially if Campbell does disappoint his old friend Kennedy by running. All the more so since only 6 per cent of the party's membership live in Scotland and the heaviest concentration of members is in London, the South and south-west England. The temptation to suggest that Scottish politicians have made their bed in the Edinburgh Parliament and should on longer claim the right to lead a UK party, may prove irresistible. Indeed, mutterings to that effect are already audible.

But while it would not be a surprising factor, it would be a deforming one. For a start it would be especially inappropriate in a party which, in stark contrast to Labour, actually has a policy to deal with the West Lothian question, namely why Scottish MPs should have the right to vote in Westminster on issues exclusive to England and Wales when, in their own country, those same issues are dealt with in Edinburgh. Because the Liberal Democrats, at least nominally, are a federalist party, wishing to see the same decentralisation of democratic government to every part of the UK, it would be especially perverse to stop anyone from any part of it from becoming leader.

But, for reasons much larger than

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"I don't think we have failed, we have just found another way that doesn't work."

Andy Elson, would-be round-the-world balloonist

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

"The chief attraction of military service has consisted, and will consist, in compulsory and irreproachable idleness."

Count Leo Tolstoy, Russian novelist

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MONITOR
ALL THE NEWS OF THE WORLD
The Sunday press gives advice to the Chancellor for the Budget

help both cash strapped firms and the growing band of business angels who are increasingly funding some of our brightest business hopes. Scotland on Sunday

AS THE Chancellor knows, the greatest threat to his plans lies outside Britain. Wall Street is valuing American shares more highly than it ever has this century, propelling US consumption, and stopping the global economy from an other-

wise certain recession. If Wall Street were to come back to earth and US growth to falter, the whole economic story would change. Mr Brown would have to spend and borrow aggressively to stave off recession, and subsequently to broaden the tax base. The open question is whether over-cautious New Labour could ever countenance such a

vigorous policy response. The Observer

TONY BLAIR and Gordon Brown are putting the final touches to the Budget this weekend. A number of moves are confidently predicted. The erosion of mortgage tax relief and increase in stamp duty will hit home owners. Smokes will go up by more than drink. But the overriding theme will be to prepare Britain for the euro and the death of the pound. And you can bet on that on being part of the Budget speech. News of the World

PUTTING THE price of petrol up again will not stop people using their cars; there is often no choice. It merely hits those who can least afford it. The only way to stop people driving is to deliver cheap, reliable and safe public transport. And we haven't yet got that. Sunday Mirror

PANDORA

JANCIS ROBINSON has learnt the hard way that no good deed goes unpunished. Britain's formidable first lady of wine recently offered a bed to a hippie-dippy mate at the familiar chateau she shares with the restaurant maven Nick Lander. But the couple were suddenly called back to these shores on business. The hospitable Robinson generously left out a selection of fine wines for her visitor to enjoy in his hosts' absence. He chugged the lot. And then progressed to the cellar, where the greedy guest went on a vintage binge that wiped out the fruits of more than 10 years of oenological research. But this setback hasn't deterred Robinson (pictured) and Lander from reaching out to City types this Friday when the couple will lead a wine stomp at the Honourable Artillery Company, in aid of Comic Relief. It's more red toes than red nose: participants need only stomp up a fiver and don a T-shirt plus shorts to tread some grapes and raise their share of Wine Relief's £1m target. Registration before 12 March is mandatory; details from Sue Hall on 0171-409 0494 (fax 0171-409 1018).

THE LAB Dems' very own Mr Voltage has once more shown that his party has its finger on the pulse of pop life. Their constitutional spokesman Bob MacLennan has written an opera about "a Scottish martyr who's transported to Australia". A sure-fire vote-winner, or what? Someone should tell him about Flat Eric.

LET'S SAVE William Hague the trouble of looking over his shoulder; Michael Portillo continues to stalk him. Latest sighting of the Spanish fly guy was at a dinner for Hammer-smith Conservatives. He was introduced by a local *grande dame* who promised to "give Michael Portillo's distinguished biological details". Realising her Freudian slip, she hurriedly corrected herself by saying she would describe "all the positions Michael Portillo has held in the Cabinet".

TED DANSON, who played Sam, the Red Sox jock, in *Cheers*, has found himself catching flak in a whole new ball game. Danson, co-founder of the green pressure group American Oceans Campaign, is the keynote speaker at the International Oil Spill Conference, an industry breakfast marking the 10th anniversary of the Exxon Valdez disaster on 21 March. The curlew-balls are coming in thick and

fast, mainly from some 40,000 Alaskans who cite new scientific research suggesting they're still suffering the effects of the 11 million gallons of crude oil dumped on their shores by the grounded tanker. "It's an act of unmitigated gall," say protesters, who've written to Danson pointing out that Exxon is sponsoring the conference through an industry organisation. "If you speak, you'll be lending your credibility to Exxon's lies..." The greenies allege that Exxon "has not paid a penny" of a \$3.5bn fine imposed by a federal court four years ago. As a real-life environmentalist, who for years played a barman on TV doesn't Danson know oil and water don't mix?

PERHAPS JERRY Springer's jaunt to these shores will inspire a kinder, gentler freak show. Instead of screening the Paula Yates debacle, *UK Living* could thrill us with more relevant topics - "Honey I jumped a queue", "Identical twins who share the same allotment", or "At weekends I secretly drive a Morris Minor".

FORTUNE, THE corporate business magazine, has an innovative new gimmick for spicing up bland business stories - topless women. A recent feature was illustrated with an eye-catching snap of bare-chested T-bird Islanders. The feature was about finding the right job. Wired, the nerdish journal of cutting-edge tech, is at it too; a recent issue included a history of the vibrator. So is this sexing up, or dumbing down?

WHO'DATHUNKIT? It was 38 years before radio garnered an audience of 50 million. It took TV a quarter of a century less to reach the same penetrative threshold. The Internet hit the 50 million mark in just four years. Yet four of the largest US-based media outfits managed to lose £50m between them online last year. In cyberspace, it seems, popularity doesn't predicate profitability.

WEIGHT WATCHERS is running a competition in which the first prize is a car. Runners-up win one of 25 pairs of Raleigh bikes. But as an eagle-eyed reader, May Brunton of Edinburgh, points out, wasn't it by spending too much time in their cars and not enough on their bikes that contestants got into Weight Watchers in the first place?

Contact Pandora on pandora@independent.co.uk

Come clean on money laundering



HUGH O'SHAUGHNESSY
The action is all part of the misguided, unwinnable and often hysterical 'war on drugs'

THE BAD news, which most people in Britain know by now, is that a \$500,000 bung to the Democratic Party of the United States is about to put an end to the livelihoods of thousands of banana-growers in the Caribbean and many workers in the cashmere factories of the Scottish Borders. The worse news, which is only just dawning on many, is that the struggling Caribbean is about to be hit by a second, and perhaps more damaging, body blow. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office is publishing a White Paper next week which will threaten the administrations of Britain's 13 remaining colonies with terrible punishments if they do not halt their participation in the trade of handling the cash generated from narcotics.

At the same time, the United Nations is convening a meeting of its Global Programme Against Money Laundering in Vienna in what will be a vain attempt to stop citizens of all nationalities handling those greasy hundreds of soiled banknotes, or trading their worth over computer screens.

This action is all part of that misguided, unwinnable and often hysterical "war on drugs", which was originally a stratagem of the late and unlamented Richard Milhous Nixon to curry favour with the middle class of his country, and which rumbles on against all logic to this day. As any war does, the war on drugs creates chaos in its wake; such chaos is about to be wrought

on the West Indies and other spots around the globe.

Wherever it is attempted, the business of trying to stop money-laundering is as impractical an enterprise as trying to stop people taking narcotics, smoking tobacco or drinking alcohol. In the Twenties the US Congress decreed that alcohol should not be sold. Reality ensured that Prohibition was rescinded a decade or so later, but not before it had spawned generations of gangsters and entrenched corruption in American police forces from Manhattan to Miami.

In a bid to achieve some success in their efforts today, governments engaged in the war on drugs are putting small and vulnerable economies in their sights. They realise that they have about as much chance of stopping money-laundering in the myriad banks of Europe and the United States as pigs have of flying.

So they go for the easier targets in places with tiny populations and simple administrative structures where everyone knows everyone else. They realise that by moving in

on, say, the British Virgin Islands, the Caymans or the Turks and Caicos they will, in fact, do little to halt the major money launderers. But it will look as though they are doing something about the problem and getting some results.

And this is not just opportunistic. It is also perverse. Decades ago Her Majesty's Government was encouraging dots of British islands in the West Indies to go in for "financial services", for the simple reason that there was precious little else for them to live off. The islanders, backed by creative financiers in the City, Amsterdam and Wall Street, quickly built up offshore emporiums. There, taxes could be avoided in comfort and money could be swapped from round the world via the satellite communications which had been thoughtfully provided by Cable and Wireless.

Nowadays the financial fun and games that were once encouraged are deemed to be evil, and have to be stopped. But today, as in the Sixties, the West Indians still have few alternative ways of making a living. Sugar has long since stopped being

the nice little earner that it once was and the local peasantry who grow bananas must submit to the power of the cheque book belonging to Mr Big in Washington. Now they are being told to bow gracefully out of the money business.

And it is not only the peoples of the Caribbean who are being affected. What, for instance, are the Gibraltarians supposed to live off these days if they are denied the fruits of money-laundering? The Cold War is over, the Mediterranean - well, all right, the western Mediterranean - is at peace and the Rock has lost its once immense strategic significance. There is a limited demand among the people of Andalusia for the warm beer and cold fish and chips which the Gibraltarians used to sell at enormous profit to the jolly tars of the Royal Navy. Their financial dealings are one of the few lifelines they have left.

Robin Cook and the United Nations must surely realise sooner or later that these latest campaigns of theirs are as unjustifiable as they are futile.

It's dumb to say that culture is just plumbing the depths



ANDREAS WHITTAM SMITH
My wife and I go to the cinema every week. Out of 50 movies a year, I am rarely disappointed

THE THESIS that some sort of "dumbing down" process is happening to our culture, discussed in a series of articles last week in *The Independent*, I reject. I don't find the evidence, quite the reverse.

Here is one test. My wife and I go to the cinema on a weekly basis. We make our choice from the film reviews, generally picking the critics' first or second recommendation. Inevitably, then, we mainly see Hollywood productions, with a leavening of art-house films. If we were going to find evidence of dumbing down, surely this is where it would be likely to appear. Not a hit of it.

Out of, say, 50 movies a year, I am rarely disappointed. In recent weeks, out of *Affliction*, *The Opposite of Sex*, *Shakespeare in Love* and *Hush*, only the last named fell short - and even so there was the pleasure of Kate Winslet's acting. I know that out of the 400 or so films a year that go round Britain's cinemas I have probably picked some of the best, and that I might find many of the others, well, "dumb". None the less this is a good experience, because film-making is always strongly driven by commercial considerations; it is not an art in which state subsidy plays much of a role. The studios are seeking to get their money back, and more.

Aside from the cinema, most of us find that we are seeking relatively narrow ranges of cultural pleasures, because our interests differ one from another and the field is so vast. Were dumbing down a serious threat, would we not find that these minority tastes were less and less well served? We would have noticed a deterioration over the years. But wherever I look, comparing the Nineties with the Fifties and Sixties, there has been no decline, but improvement. When I first discovered opera in my mid-twenties, apart from Glyndebourne there were no regional opera companies. Either you went to London to hear live per-

formances, or you waited for the occasional regional tour. Now you can find centres of operatic excellence well away from the capital city.

I regularly buy recorded music at the local outlet of a national chain of music retailers. Downstairs there is a vast emporium of popular music, while upstairs, in half the space, classical music is stocked. And here I have to marvel at the richness of what is available.

Before going to a concert, I like to familiarise myself with music I don't know. I go to buy the CDs with the concert details in my hand. Since I have a passion at the moment for chamber music, my requests are for this trio, or that quartet, or a piano quintet by so and so, or whatever - a minority interest if ever there were one. Yet this average shop, 10 minutes from my home, is almost always able to supply me immediately with what I am looking for; indeed, I can often choose from a number of different recordings. As I glance along the racks, I am astonished by the range. Do I seek English choral music? It is there. Am

I wanting contemporary music by German or American composers? I will find it. Is any of Chopin's piano music missing? I doubt it.

I am equally delighted by my local bookshop. While there is evidence that standards of literacy have declined, as people pay more attention to radio and television and less to the printed page, this trend shows no sign of reducing the supply of books. Recall the range of publications reviewed in yesterday's newspapers. In my own case I make out a book list twice a year. As usual, just before Christmas I went to stock up. I had Bryan Magee in mind. I have always admired his ability to explain the work of the great philosophers, and since briefly dabbling in the subject at university I have never lost my interest - which is normally satisfied by reading nothing more extensive than the occasional book review or for instance, a biography of Bertrand Russell.

However this time I went further, and bought Magee's recently published *The Story of Philosophy*. The text is everything for which I had hoped, but what surprised me was the style of publication. The publisher is Dorling Kindersley, celebrated for its well-designed guides - *Eye-witness* travel guides, and for CD-Roms about the way things work, and for books such as Miriam Stoppard's *Questions Children Ask*. But here, the publisher's skills have been applied to enhancing understanding of philosophical concepts by means of well-chosen illustrations and good design.

There are three or four pictures on every one of the 230 pages, along with boxes containing nuggets of useful information in the margins. It works well. A publisher such as Dorling Kindersley, whose shares are quoted on the stock exchange, would never contemplate such a venture if we really did live in a dumbing down age.

Yes, argue the supporters of the



Smart and classy: Gwyneth Paltrow in 'Shakespeare in Love'

thesis, but look at television. There you will find many examples of dumbing down. Has not the BBC palpably reduced its standards? Nowadays, the Corporation even transmits confessional talk shows with phoney guests in the afternoon; how much lower can you get? Just last week, the House of Lords staged a debate on the subject, in which assorted peers and baronesses expressed their disunity.

I find differently. Television may be primarily an entertainment medium, but coming a close second is its role as an educator. It is still teaching me. I was completely absorbed, for example, by the Monica Lewinsky saga in all its aspects, from the President's cigar to the impeachment provisions of the American constitution.

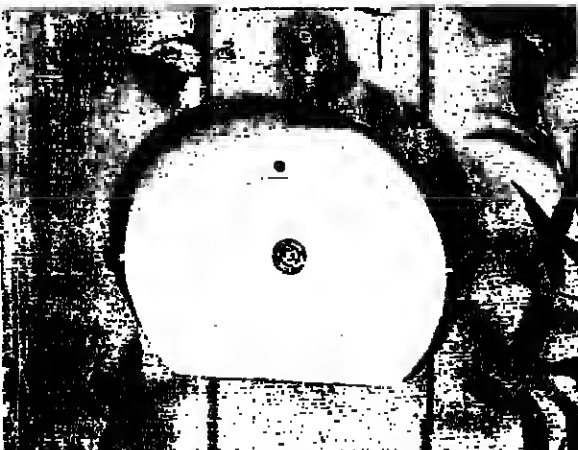
Regarding the second item, the continuous television coverage of the proceedings in the House of Rep-

resentatives, and then in the Senate, provided both by CNN and the BBC, enabled me to gain a deeper understanding of the machinery of American government. I was fascinated by the debates, by how they were conducted, by the range of opinions that were expressed, and by the assumptions behind them. If television works for me in this valuable way, it must do so for everybody.

And behind my good experiences lies a development which the dumbing down school has failed to notice. Access to culture gets easier. Multiplex cinemas have increased the choice available to movie-goers. Music-lovers have benefited from the old vinyl records being replaced, first with tapes and then with compact discs. Book prices are falling. The multiplication of TV channels is a blessing, not a curse. Indeed, rather than dumbing down I believe the nation is trading up.

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Making dinosaurs is merely a fantasy

SCIENTISTS OFTEN complain to me that the media misunderstands their work. But I would suggest that, in fact, the reality is just the opposite, and that it is science which misunderstands media.

Let's be clear: all professions look bad in the movies. And there's a good reason for this. Movies don't portray career paths; they conscript interesting lifestyles to serve a plot. So lawyers are all unscrupulous and doctors are all uncaring. Psychiatrists are all crazy, and politicians are all corrupt. All cops are psychopaths, and all businessmen are crooks. Even moviemakers come off badly: directors are megalomaniacs, actors are spoilt brats. Since all occupations are portrayed negatively, why expect scientists to be treated differently?

But wait, you may be thinking. Don't these movie images provide some insight into the attitudes of the wider society? Don't they reflect society in some way? No, they do not; for proof of that, you need only look at images of women in the last 50 years. Fifty years ago, movies were characterised by strong women - Joan Crawford,

Barbara Stanwyck, Bette Davis. Women of intelligence and substance, women to be reckoned with. Since then, during a time of dramatic change for women in society, the movies have portrayed women primarily as giggling idiots or as prostitutes.

I've said that scientists don't understand media, and one form of misunderstanding concerns why stories about the scientific method are as they are. I hear several principal complaints: unnecessary added plot (sex, violence, explosions, etc); inaccurate and implausible plot devices and images. Fear-based and negative.

Let's take these in order. Why are unnecessary razzle-dazzle and exaggerated plot elements meretriciously added? Well, because it's a movie. Movies tell larger-than-life, exaggerated stories. Most feature sex and violence, and explosions whenever possible. As the movie mogul Sam Goldwyn said, "sex will outlive us all".

A variant complaint is to say the story doesn't need one or another element. The Oxford biologist Richard Dawkins, whom I very much admire, is quoted as saying "the natural



PODIUM
MICHAEL CRICHTON
From a speech to the American Association of Science conference, in Anaheim, California

world is fascinating in its own right. It really doesn't need human drama to be fascinating." Of course the natural world is fascinating in its own right, but *Jurassic Park* isn't the natural world. The jungle is on a sound-stage at Universal. It has been built to suit the action; if an actor has to climb a tree, the Fiberglas bark is supported inside with metal girders. It is lit by artificial light.

And, for the most part, the dinosaurs aren't on this set at all; they're added later, by computer. Professor Dawkins said he didn't know why you needed the people in the story. The answer is that the person who dreamt up this particular fiction wanted it to be that way. It was written to revive the corny movies of people and dinosaurs together that I had loved in childhood. *King Kong*, *One Million Years BC*, all of that. *Jurassic Park* is meant to stand in a long line of related movies. It is thus explicitly a work of fiction. The natural world is irrelevant.

Let's go to the second point: inaccuracy and made-up plot devices. In a story such as *Jurassic Park*, to complain of inaccuracy is downright weird. Nobody can make a dinosaur. Therefore the story is a fantasy. How can accuracy have any meaning in a fantasy? It's like the reporters who asked me whether I had visited genetic engineering firms while doing my research. Why should I? They don't know how to make a dinosaur, either.

Point three: why are the stories about science always so negative? We've already discussed that characters in every

profession are shown negatively. But what about the stories themselves? Why can't we have positive stories? One answer is that people like scary movies. They enjoy being frightened. But the more important answer is that we live in a culture of relentless, round-the-clock boosterism for science and technology. With each new discovery and invention, the virtues are always oversold, the drawbacks understated. Who can forget the freely mobile society of the automobile, the friendly atom, the paperless office, the impending crisis of too much leisure time, or the era of universal education ushered in by television? We now hear the same Utopian claims about the Internet. But everyone knows science and technology are inevitably a mixed blessing.

How then will the fears, the concerns, the downside of technology be expressed? Because it has to appear somewhere. So it appears in movies and in stories - which I would argue is a good place for it to appear.

The edited speech appears in the latest *Science Journal*.

underling

Time to stop hating Barbie



ANN
TRENEMAN

It's no good tut-tutting. The fact is that one billion Barbies have been sold since 1959



The reality of Barbie: the average little girl owns five of the dolls, but does not always treat them with the respect that grown-ups like to imagine Alan Peebles

TOMORROW IS Barbie's 40th birthday. You probably don't want to know that and, frankly, I wasn't all that thrilled when the Barbie News Desk at Mattel Toys rang me last autumn to prepare me for the big day. Since then there have been at least 10 calls and even an invitation to New York to attend the Barbie Women of Achievement Birthday Ball. Sadly, I had to miss that event, which I'm sure was very pink. But none of this explains why I am writing about Barbie today. I am doing this because when I mentioned the Barbie birthday hard-sell to people, their reactions were so fierce that you would think I was talking about something serious.

"Won't have her in the house," said one father. Others went on about how boring she was for such a long period of time that I could only surmise that she wasn't boring at all. Did I know, they asked, that she was made by peasants in China? Did I know that if a real woman were her shape she would fall over? Others took a more personal approach and, as they say on daytime TV, started to share their pain. "My mother wouldn't let me have one and, you know, I think it all started from there," said a friend. I looked at her. Irony? But she was serious. "I really wanted that doll!"

Then the Pink One became the latest in a series of politically incorrect types to feel the wrath of Germaine Greer. "With her non-functional body, boasting a nipple-free bosom more than twice the circumference of her minute waist, legs twice as long as her torso, and feet so tiny that she cannot stand on them, Barbie is unlikely to have been very effective in her career roles as astronaut, vet or stewardess," says Ms Greer in her new book, *The Whole Woman*. She holds Barbie responsible for teaching women to despise their bodies and therefore prompting us to spend so much on make-up. Germaine says that this money would be better put towards the "cost of hooks or computers or bicycles".

Undoubtedly Ms Greer will be celebrating Barbie's 40th by taking off her hair shirt and sending it to her. But I found little comfort in another side of the debate, put by John Pilger. In the latest issue of *New*

Statesman, he takes feminism to task for its obsession with what he believes is trivial. He is in despair because women want to talk about nail polish and who cleans the toilet. This poses an obvious question. Anyway, I'm sure Barbie is in the same category (though, it must be said, her plastic bathrooms do not contain a toilet). Mr Pilger thinks that such trivia diverts from the real issues in life, such as poverty. "The public voices of feminism, like those of the political elite, have all but severed their ties with the aspirations of ordinary men and women."

Does no one have a grip on reality here? The truth is that, for better or worse, little girls like Barbie - be they poor, middle-class or rich. It is something that the First World and Third World agree on. In America there are entire stores devoted to Barbie. I wandered into one once in Seattle. It was so pink and cloying that it was like walking into one of those tinted blanchanges sprinkled with hundreds and thousands that are sold in super-

markets. I couldn't escape fast enough. But when I went to Moscow, I again saw a pink awning with the word "Barbie" on it. Inside, armed guards watched over glass cases that showed Barbie in a variety of plastic tableaux. The place was buzzing with excitement.

It is no good tut-tutting and saying it is all too trivial or sexist. The fact is that 1 billion Barbies (and family members) have been sold since 1959. She is hardly going to fade away. By the time Barbie turns 80 there will be at least a billion more out there. Mattel is good at this. They know that capitalism is all about growth. Never has a doll had her family extended so ruthlessly. Every year the company creates yet more cousins and siblings for Barbie, not to mention outfits, pets, cousins, nationalities and careers. If Barbie were real she would have a nervous breakdown about it all, renounce pink for life and tell her ineffectual boyfriend Ken that it's all over.

But she is not real, and another

thing that must be faced is that little girls know this. Have we all forgotten what it is like to play with dolls? I grew up doing so, but that did not mean that I did it while sitting quietly in a clean, starched pinafore, gently back-combing Barbie's hair. My sisters and I treated our dolls appallingly. We had tea parties, yes, but we also had a theatre of war. Dolls were routinely kidnapped and attacked. Several were scalped and at least one was mutilated beyond repair. It was hardly pretty or nice.

I now have two daughters. When the eldest was born I said that she would never own a Barbie, but somehow she acquired one without my permission. I discovered that Barbie was not nearly so desirable now that she was no longer on a shelf in a store. In fact, she could usually be found thrown in a corner somewhere. Mattel says that every girl in Britain owns five Barbies and that is probably how many are floating round my house now. But none of them are beautiful or even properly dressed. Several have lost

a leg or an arm and most are doomed to a Bad Hair Life. Little girls take something that is unreal, like Barbie, and make her real through play and neglect. Barbie herself may be passive but the world that little girls create is not.

Perhaps it is time the grown-ups started being sensible about it all. All we are talking about here is a bit of curved plastic who has managed to achieve icon status by decades of clever marketing. Things could be worse. Of all the friends and family members created for Barbie, she has never had any parents. She is a clone and one with a murky past, descended from a vampy heroine called Lili who appeared in a *Dos Eids* cartoon. Lili was adapted as a sex toy and sold in tobaccoists before her rights were bought up by Mattel. But Barbie as a character is no Lili. She is very much mistress of her own universe. Men are superfluous (just look at Ken). At 40, she is single and a virgin, has had almost every career going and is rich enough to buy whatever she wants.

She is self-reliant and probably, dare I say it, a feminist.

Even so, I'm not that keen on her. I do not think that this is an icon that the sisterhood needs to reclaim. The truth is, I'd prefer it if there weren't five of her lying in various stages of undress around my house, but then, that's life. The alternative is to pretend she doesn't exist. I don't even want to think about what kind of guerrilla war a Ban the Barbie campaign would start. It would only make her more important.

I decided to ask the real expert on this subject, my eight-year-old. What did she think of Barbie? "OK," she said. Just OK? "Yeah, OK." Well, I asked, did owning a Barbie make her want to look just like Barbie, and have her figure, and go out and buy make-up? Did it make her not want to think about poverty, or whatever? Did she want to be Barbie? "Yeah," she said. My heart skipped a beat. "Really?" I asked. She paused for a moment. "Well, yeah, I'd like to have long hair." And with that she went outside to play.

culture depths



ly a fantas

Slave, mother of 10, genius

MONDAY BOOK

CHARLOTTE SMITH:
A CRITICAL BIOGRAPHY
BY LORRAINE FLETCHER, MACMILLAN PRESS, £47.50



THE PATTERN looks just a bit too familiar: a modern academic, whose weapons include extravagant claims of neglected genius and a variety of -isms, attempts to free yet another forgotten author from obscurity. It is even more convenient if that author just happens to be a damsel whose distress is attributable to male exploitation.

Familiarity there certainly is, but it should not breed contempt. Charlotte Smith (1749-1806) may be a modern biographer's dream, but her restoration to the Romantic literary vanguard is in no way dependent on present-day whims.

Lorraine Fletcher's suggestion that Smith became "the most popular English novelist of her time" is no exaggeration. And, had anyone compiled a top-ten list of popular poetry around 1790, Smith's *Elegiac Sonnets* would certainly have been there. This was why the unknown 21-year-old William

Wordsworth dared to pay her a visit, why contemporaries such as William Cowper used terms such as "genius" about her and why she is Jane Austen's "strongest single inspiration". Yet had not Charlotte Turner - while still two months short of 16 - been (as she put it) "sold, a legal prostitute" to Benjamin Smith, the 23-year-old son of a West India merchant, she might never have published at all. Charlotte, with her brother and sister, then lived with her aunt at Bignor in Sussex, where the children were "free to explore the Downs and seashore".

To find herself transported to a residence above a Cheapside warehouse must have been a shock to the system. But this was just the first of many.

In April 1787, still only 17, Charlotte was pregnant for the second time. A diphtherial infection swept through Cheapside, causing the death of her first son on the same day as her second child was born. Social historians sometimes attempt to construct the past as another world altogether. High infant mortality rates, they argue, made death something parents accepted without the lifelong grief they feel now. But passages in Charlotte's novels about the death of a child, as Fletcher shrewdly comments, show that it was no easier then than later.

By now it was clear to Charlotte what kind of a man she had married. Benjamin had no head for business. He spent most of his time at the races or at boxing-matches, was often drunk and then violent, and ran up enormous gambling debts. To escape from his creditors he fled to Normandy in 1784, and ordered Charlotte to join him. Fletcher compellingly uses this traumatic experience to open her narrative.

On a cold evening in October 1784, Charlotte and her nine children, aged from 16 to two, boarded the packet to Dieppe. That winter, in the dilapidated chateau Benjamin had rented, a tenth child was born. At the same time, two decisions were born in Charlotte's mind. The first was that she would leave her husband - although divorce was impossible - and the second was that she would try to support her family by writing.



William Wordsworth paid Smith a visit as a 21-year-old fan

Over the next two decades she was to publish 10 novels, six books for children and several collections of poetry. Popular though each of these became, they never quite brought her financial stability or even happiness, as Cowper's description of her - "chained to her desk like a slave to his oar" - forcibly demonstrates.

I shall select just two aspects from a biography in which there is so much to praise. The first is Fletcher's sheer admiration for Smith. An undisguised partiality wafts from the pages like a breath of fresh air amid the stuffiness of academia. Second, Fletcher's analyses of the novels are some of the most valuable pieces of criticism ever written on Smith. She is particularly adept at using material from the fiction to supplement details of Charlotte's life. Only once or twice does this practice threaten to spill over into conjecture.

Fletcher is aided by some of the extraordinary events that Charlotte experienced. Not many would be Gothic novelists ever woke up in a Normandy chateau to find in the bedroom eight robed monks, who then proceeded to kidnap a newborn child and carry him two miles through the snow to their monastery for baptism.

That did not prevent Charlotte from sheltering emigrant French clergy fleeing from revolutionary persecution in 1792, even though she could scarcely afford to support her own family. Desperately sad though they are, perhaps some lines from her poem "The Emigrants" remain the best epitaph on her life: "For never yet could I derive relief/ When my swollen heart was bursting with its sorrows/ From the sad thought, that others like myself/ Live but to swell affliction's countless tribes/ Onward t labour, as the baffled wave/ Which you rough beach repulses, that returns/ With the next breath of wind, to fall again."

PAUL JARMAN

MONDAY POEM

FOR AN ANNIVERSARY
BY ADRIENNE RICH

The wing of the osprey lifted
over the nest on Tomales Bay
into fog and difficult gust
raking treetops from Inverness Ridge on over
The left wing shouldered into protective
gesture the left wing we thought broken
and the young beneath in the windy nest
creaking there in their hunger
and the tides beseeching, besieging
the bay in its ruined languor

Our poem today is from Adrienne Rich's new collection, 'Midnight Salvage: poems 1995-1998' (WW Norton, £14.95)

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Sheikh Isa, Emir of Bahrain

THE EMIR of Bahrain, Sheikh Isa bin Salman al-Khalifa, was a father figure to his nation and in the region.

When he was buried on Saturday, hours after his sudden death from a heart attack, 10,000 of his subjects (he preferred to call them his family and children) turned up to pay their last respects in the cemetery alone. Almost five times as many, or 10 per cent of the population, were in the streets surrounding the Riffa cemetery, although the funeral announcement was made on the state-run television only 15 minutes before the start.

His popularity stemmed from his common touch with ordinary people in this, still very tribal, society where the head of the tribe is expected to act as father, to be provider, protector, judge and friend.

"Welcome to my country, I hope my people are making you feel at home," were his words the first time I shook his hand many years ago, during a *Majlis* - the open court he held fortnightly where anyone could attend and speak to him, or hand in a petition.

Almost 20 years later, after two Gulf wars, unrest and threats from powerful hostile neighbours, and two serious illnesses the Emir still greeted his foreign guests with a charming, warm smile and the same friendly phrase welcoming the visitor to his country. The natives still lined up in their hundreds, shook hands, kissed him on the forehead, the nose and the chin, before sitting down to drink the Arabic coffee. Their stay had become shorter to make room for others, as the queue spilled from the palace into the surrounding streets; a nightmare for security. But the Emir himself had always been popular, rejecting any security measures that kept him away from his people. According to his close aides, he was conscious that oil wealth should not change his simple way of life, and he did not lose his common touch.

Sheikh Isa was born in 1933, just one year after the first oil in Arabia was struck on the island, when the economy was struggling as the production of Japanese cultured pearls threatened the economy that survived on pearling for hundreds of years. Once under Portuguese rule and then within the ambit of Persia, Bahrain had been a sheikhdom of the Khalifas since 1783, and a British protectorate from 1816.

The young Isa was educated by private tutors from Egypt, Britain and other countries. In 1958, at the age of 25, he was appointed heir by his father, the ruler Sheikh Salman bin Hamad al-Khalifa, whom he succeeded as a ruler after his death in 1961. But he did not take the title of Emir until Bahrain's independence from Britain in 1971.

Sheikh Isa was a modernist and became a key Western ally and a good friend of Britain. He was forward-looking and ahead of his oil-rich neighbours in developing an economy based on trade, invest-

ment, banking and service. Although the tiny island of Bahrain was the first to find oil on the western side of the Gulf in 1932, it was also the first to run out. He made it a priority to diversify and build Bahrain as the service economy of investment and off-shore banking that flourished under his government.

After independence, Sheikh Isa developed a comparatively advanced foreign policy opening to the West. The open policy and the relaxed laws, designed to attract investment, developed Bahrain into a liberal multi-cultural, multi-faith society that became a haven in a region where strict harsh Islamic rules interfere with the day-to-day life. Bahrain is about the only nation in the region where there is a Jewish synagogue, several Christian churches, Sikh, Hindu and other temples. There tens of thousands of foreign workers from the Indian sub-continent and the Far East can practise their religion freely.

Education, health care and social welfare became a priority during Sheikh Isa's rule. Bahrain achieved the highest level of literacy in the Arab world, and provided levels of social welfare and health care much higher than its massively rich neighbours.

Women in Bahrain became among the most sophisticated, highly educated and better paid in the region. Although a deeply religious man himself, Sheikh Isa believed in the individual's right to a free choice; thus women were treated equally there are no laws banning alcohol, and the Bahrainis have a choice of more than 25 satellite channels beaming down to their television sets.

Sheikh Isa also pushed for developing the long causeway that links the oil-rich province of western Saudi Arabia with the island. Saudi and foreign workers drive along the causeway to spend the weekend enjoying Bahrain's relaxed rules, and bring with them good business. During his trip last year to Washington and other US cities, Sheikh Isa's business attitude prevailed. As



Sheikh Isa succeeded his father as ruler of Bahrain in 1961, and declared himself Emir in 1971

and US military aircraft to use his bases against Saddam Hussein in Iraq, during the 1991 war to liberate Kuwait, and Bahrain is also the headquarters of Uncom, the committee in charge of disarming Iraq.

This caused resentment among some of the pro-Iranian Shia clergy in the island, who also objected to Bahrain's liberal laws. Iran has a longstanding claim on the island that

though figures are disputed, the Shia, originally migrants from Iran, are believed to be a majority of the island's half-million citizens.

The unrest was compounded by demands from liberals and intellectuals to restore parliament. Following a showdown with left-wing members of over regional policies, Sheikh Isa dissolved parliament in August 1975, a mere two and a half

years after it was established, making Bahrain and Kuwait the only Gulf nations to have elected parliaments. It was replaced by a Shura council of 40 members, most of whom are members of the old parliament. The Sheikh was planning to include women and make a section of parliament elected. But he came under pressure from other secular and business forces fearing that an open election might produce an Islamic fundamentalist government. This they saw as bad for business.

Sheikh Isa was liked by the majority of Bahrainis, a man genuinely eager to preserve social stability and the welfare of his citizens. He was a man of civility, his ways were paternalistic but passionate. He felt betrayed when young people began arson attacks and disturbances, and was equally upset when opposition based abroad demanded participation in power and claimed to represent the people whom he had so long taken care of.

ADEL DARWISH

Isa bin Salman al-Khalifa: born Manama, Bahrain 3 June 1933; succeeded 1961 as Ruler of Bahrain; adopted title of Emir 1971; married (five sons, four daughters); died Manama 6 March 1999.

Sheikh Isa was liked by the majority of Bahrainis, a man genuinely eager to preserve social stability and the welfare of his citizens. He was a father figure with a common touch, but a modernist; his ways were paternalistic but passionate

well as impressing American observers with his modesty and simple ways, he equally astonished them by behaving in a business-like manner that was at variance with their experience of other Arab leaders. He held a banquet and invited leading businessmen and bankers, then took a back seat and let his finance and trade minister do the talking to help attract business to Bahrain, while he deployed his humour and charm.

Sheikh Isa also allowed British

goes back some 200 years. Both the late Shah and Ayatollah Khomeini renewed the claim.

Shia Muslims, who face higher unemployment, have little political clout compared with the minority Sunnis, the mainstream Islamic sect to which the ruling family belongs. The Iranian-educated Shia clergyman led a wave of anti-government unrest by inciting youths to stone bare-legged women athletes during an international marathon in December 1994. Al-

though figures are disputed, the Shia, originally migrants from Iran, are believed to be a majority of the island's half-million citizens.

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Dennis Viollet

THERE IS a compelling case for citing the Busby Babes as the most joyously precocious collection of soccer talent ever drawn together under the banner of one English club. That Manchester United team, so savagely devastated by the Munich air disaster in 1958, boasted the likes of Duncan Edwards and Tommy Taylor, Roger Byrne and Eddie Colman, and there was a young fellow called Bobby Charlton who could play a bit, too. Yet one of the side's key performers was widely and peculiarly underrated, though not, it should be emphasised, by Matt Busby himself.

In terms of appearance, Dennis Viollet did not correspond with the popular image of a goal-scoring hero. Wan of countenance and slim to the point of scrawiness, he seemed pathetically equipped physically to mix it with strapping defenders. Yet the prolific Mancunian was a gem, both as a foil for the magnificent Taylor and as a marksman in his own right. Indeed, the fact that no one - not Law, not Best, not Can-



Viollet: Busby Babe peculiarly underrated

tona - has netted more times than he in a single season for the Red Devils offers telling evidence of his rare calibre.

Viollet was blessed with instinctive ball control, searing acceleration and the vision to use these attributes to full advantage. Arguably he was at his most effective when working

in tandem with Taylor, the bold Yorkshireman who lost his life on that fateful German runway. Big Tommy was majestic in the air while his less conspicuous but formidably lethal partner was a steel dart at ground level. During the mid-1950s when the Babes were sweeping all before them, the duo struck up a seemingly telepathic understanding, creating space for each other by their imaginative movement and registering a river of goals that showed no signs of drying up.

Yet, while Taylor was rewarded by frequent international recognition, the equally if contrastingly talented Viollet had to wait until two years after the crash before winning the first of only two England caps, a circumstance rendered all the more mysterious by the uninspired nature of some of his rivals.

However, nothing could detract from Viollet's derring-do on the club scene. After captaining Manchester schoolboys - and also playing regularly for his country at that stage - he joined Manchester United as an

amateur in 1949, turning professional a year later and making his first-team debut in 1953/53.

Thereafter he held his own against white-hot competition as Busby's youthful revolution gathered exhilarating momentum and he won a regular place during 1953/54. Settling brilliantly at inside-left and contributing at least 20 senior goals per season, Viollet went on to share in a succession of heady triumphs, notably the League Championships of 1955/56 and 1956/57. As United blazed a trail into Europe, his pedigree shone through ever more vividly and his evident relish for continental opposition made his sojourn in the international wilderness increasingly perplexing.

Cruelly, the United idyll was halted at Munich, on the way home from a European Cup trip to Belgrade, when the club's plane crashed on its third attempt at take-off. Eight players and 15 other passengers died but Viollet, seated next to Charlton, was thrown clear and survived.

As the extent of the tragedy sunk

in, it was feared that even those footballers who had escaped with their lives would never be the same again. Viollet had suffered head injuries and took no part in United's immediate future, missing their emotional progress to the FA Cup Final.

However, after a couple of League outings he was pronounced fit enough to play at Wembley, where he proved sadly unable to do himself justice in the defeat by Bolton Wanderers.

However, fears that Viollet might be diminished as a performer in the long term were banished rapidly during 1958/59 when, converted to Taylor's old role as centre-forward, he excelled as the depleted Red Devils confounded most predictions by finishing as First Division runners-up. Come the following campaign his form was even more remarkable as he notched 32 goals in 36 matches, which remains a club record despite the wealth of expensive strikers employed at Old Trafford over the subsequent four decades.

As a result the long-awaited England call arrived, though Viollet was to be

DURING A life devoted to the making of port, John Smithes made a major contribution not just to the family firm of Cockburn but to the port trade in general.

At Cockburn (now owned by Allied-Domecq), he helped to shape the company's Fine Ruby Port and the brand leader in Britain, Cockburn's Special Reserve. His perfectionist quest for quality combined with an intimate knowledge of Portugal's Douro Valley led to the selection of improved clones and the modern system of planting grape varieties in blocks.

A diminutive man with a big sombrero hat, Smithes was one of the port trade's most enduring, if not always endearing, eccentrics. His legendary volatile temper saw him explode more times than the beloved shotgun which accompanied him on trips in search of partridge and snipe. But he was humble enough to put things right with an apology, an unusual trait in the rigid, hierarchical structure of the port trade. And he was much liked by the Douro Valley farmers on whose grapes Cockburn's relied. When Portugal was embroiled in colonial wars in Angola and Mozambique, he would regularly send packages of cigarettes and other tokens of support to the company's workers.

John Smithes was born in 1910 and went to school at Anesbury and then Oxford. He joined the family business at Cockburn's London office in 1930. He eschewed the suit and tie and bowler hat traditionally worn in the port trade for a more rural outfit of tweed, brown brogues and trilby.

Smithes couldn't wait to get to Portugal where he was soon helping his father Archie with the blending. In 1938, he became a partner in Cockburn's, then, after the Second World War broke out, he and his wife Nancy joined the RAF and WRAP respectively.

Although Douglas Bader had been a schoolfriend, Smithes lacked the basic landing skills and consequently inflicted more punishment on his own aircraft than the Nazis. In a damage-limitation exercise, he was sent to the back of his aircraft as an observer and rear gunner.

His reputation for accuracy as a wine spitter however was established in the tasting room at Vila Nova de Gaia. Here, he was able to hit the target from six feet, thanks apparently to very few teeth getting in the way. The wine never touched the floor, says the Cockburn's director Peter Cobb.

Instantly recognisable in his broad-brimmed hat, Smithes was a down-to-earth character. He was not interested in creature comforts and seemed to thrive on the primitive conditions of the rugged Douro Valley. At the Cockburn's house at Tua, according to the writer Wyndham Fletcher, "the visits of ladies were not encouraged. The beds were like boards, there was only one bath with limited hot water [and] one primitive lavatory." In similar vein, the Cockburn's house at Val Coelho featured mosquito nets but no bathroom.



Smithes: a fine spitter. The wine never touched the floor

John Smithes' grandfather, John T. Smithes, had purchased the Quinta do Tua estate from Dona Antónia Ferreira in 1890 largely to provide himself with a base in the Douro Valley. At the time, Tua was not particularly significant for the production of port, but John T. Smithes used the vineyard to experiment with grafting and different pruning methods, a tradition which launched his grandson on a viticultural mission of his own. At the Tua vineyard in 1933, the young John Smithes experimented with the planting and clonal selection of the individual grape varieties used to blend port.

At a time when farmers were uprooting the top-quality grape variety, Touriga Nacional, because of its un-economic output, Smithes foresaw the danger of the variety's extinction and successfully produced higher-yielding, high-quality clones of the grape. Traditionally port's many grape varieties were jumbled up in the vineyard. Smithes pioneered the modern-day practice of planting individual grape varieties in blocks, although it wasn't until the 1970s that Cockburn's adopted the practice for all its vineyards. According to Peter Cobb, it took the trade 30 years to realise that it couldn't depend on independent growers to provide all their high-quality fruit.

Smithes' tasting acumen was renowned. Port tasters generally divide into nose and palate specialists, says Antonio Graça, Cockburn's master blender who worked with John Smithes for four decades. Smithes was both, with a very good nose and an even better palate. According to his friend David Lett, owner of Eyrrie vineyards in Oregon, Smithes coined the term "grip" for the intensity of flavour and aftertaste of port, a feature he valued above all other winespeak terms.

Other winespeakers introduced new technology and championed the pumping-over method of vinification over auto-ventilation. His strength lay in blending ruby ports and old tawnies, doing much to shape Cockburn's Vintage Character Port.

Launched in 1969 as a blend of premium ruby ports, Cockburn's Special Reserve, as it was later renamed, has become by some distance Britain's favourite port. Famously, Cockburn's failed to go along with the rest of the port houses in declaring 1977 a vintage year. From a marketing point of view, it was a disaster as customers felt that Cockburn's had lost interest in vintage port. From a quality standpoint, however, Smithes had the last laugh. A recent re-appraisal of the 1977 vintage has shown that, despite the accolades, the vintage was overrated.

John Smithes was a countryman at heart. In April 1953, 10 years before the Douro River was dammed, he retraced the perilous 1846 voyage in which Baron Forrester, one of port's most influential figures, weighted down by a leather belt laden with gold pieces, had drowned, while the women survived thanks to the crinolines which had kept them afloat. With George Robertson, author of the Faber book on port (Port, 1978), he embarked on a three-day voyage in a *barco rabelo*, the boat traditionally used to transport port, 40 pipes at a time (a pipe is a 550-litre port barrel), from high in the Douro to the maturation lodges of Vila Nova de Gaia on the coast.

On his retirement, John Smithes left Portugal for Strete in South Devon, where, with a view over Start Bay, he converted a property into a miniature Douro quinta, complete with terraces and vines.

ANTHONY ROSE

John Henry Smithes, port producer: born 19 April 1910; married 1932 Nancy Scott (died 1996); died Strete, Devon 22 January 1999.

Virginia Durr

VIRGINIA DURR was a well-born white Southern lady who devoted most of her life to campaigning for civil rights in the United States.

In the 1950s, she and her husband, the lawyer Clifford Durr, were in the thick of the civil rights struggle in Alabama. Few local whites supported them, but they were buoyed up by faith in the federal courts and by friendship with black neighbours whose political self-confidence was being built by up Martin Luther King and other leaders.

Both Durrs were staunch Southern purists, and for Virginia especially their struggle was against more than local racism: it was against the unholy alliance between such racism and Northern-based big business, which bore down on poorer whites as well as blacks, and enabled Southern reactionaries to dominate Congressional committees. Supremely assured, outspoken and funny, Virginia Durr often seemed to her friends to constitute the most effective left-wing movement in America.

She was raised in Birmingham, Alabama, a city whose heavy industry, as she soon learned, was very much at the mercy of foreign absentee landlords. Her family, the Fosters, were minor aristocrats with a dissident streak. Virginia's paternal grandfather, a doctor, had owned a plantation which once had a dozen slaves, but he opposed the war against the Union. Her father, a Presbyterian pastor, was declared a heretic by his congregation for doubting the literal truth of certain Bible stories. Thereafter, Virginia's lot was genteel poverty, though she went to finishing school in New York, she had to leave Wellesley College after two years for want of money.

By the time she married Clifford Durr in 1926, Virginia had begun to question the social order. Her brother-in-law Hugo Black (later a Supreme Court justice) set her thinking about labour problems; she had mixed with black students, and she had learned that women could be more than wives and mothers.

In Birmingham, the Durrs witnessed some of the worst effects of the Depression, but in 1933 they moved to Washington and were able to make their mark on the New Deal. Cliff worked at first in a government agency to rescue banks; in 1941 he moved to the Federal Communications Commission (where he put public service broadcasting on a firm footing). Virginia worked on a Democratic committee trying to abolish the poll-tax, which in many Southern states effectively denied the vote to poor whites as well as blacks. (One new friend was the young Lyndon B. Johnson, whose Voting Rights Act in 1965 finally swept away this injustice.)

In 1938 Virginia returned to Birmingham for a meeting of the colour-blind Southern Conference for Human Welfare: it felt as if "the whole South was coming together to make a new day". In 1941 she became vice-chairman of the committee against the poll-tax, and with help from Eleanor Roosevelt gained a partial victory next year when Congress exempted servicemen in federal elections. Reading *Black House*, Virginia wondered if her family saw her as Mrs Jellicoe for her campaigning now had to compete with three daughters. Yet the Durrs didn't hesitate to take in Jessica (Decca) Mifflord and her baby daughter, when Decca's husband Esmond Romilly went off to the war.

In 1947, anti-Communist purges in the US were well under way. Virginia herself was never asked to join the Party; she was, after all, famously indiscreet. The one party which did appeal to her was Henry Wallace's Progressive, for whom she campaigned in 1948. In the same year, Cliff resigned from the FCC rather than have to administer the "loyalty oaths" which Truman now required of government servants. With her 'ers also forced him out of a job in Denver, so in 1952 the Durrs returned to Alabama, where at least, said Cliff, "I know who the sons-of-bitches are".

Cliff opened a law office in his home



"Tilla, you look as though you have just come out of a documentary." Cliff and Virginia Durr and daughter

town, Montgomery, and Virginia became his secretary. In 1954 Senator Eastland, of Mississippi, tried to show that she (and by association Mr Justice Black) was part of a Red conspiracy. This racist bully ("common as pig's tracks", said Virginia) reckoned without her skills in wire-pulling - or her ability to hold her tongue when silence was the best weapon.

Later in 1954 the Supreme Court outlawed segregated schools. In Montgomery, among those who helped black children settle into formerly all-white schools was a friend of the Durrs, Rosa Parks, a black seamstress. In December 1955 she was arrested for refusing to give up her seat on a bus to a white man. It was Cliff who had her released from custody, and he helped her decide to test the constitutionality of such segregation.

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People funded the case, which was taken up by their local lawyer Fred Gray. Meanwhile the black people of Montgomery organised a year-long bus boycott, until the Supreme

the Durrs did become easier. At home, they were no longer ostracised, while Cliff was invited to lecture in Europe. His death in 1975 was a huge loss, but it helped that by then Virginia's memories were much in demand: a series of interviews over three years yielded an autobiography, *Outside the Magic Circle* (1985), which admirably caught the salt savour of her story-telling.

In 1980 she was asked to speak at Radcliffe. "They tell me to talk about myself, and I find that hard to do in 20 minutes." She visited China, and made further trips to England. She loved English gardens, especially "Sissinghurst", and indulged Epicurean tastes that surprised those who had got to know her amid the plain living and high thinking of the Post Level - the Durr farm outside Montgomery.

Eating snails after the opera at Covent Garden was a pleasure that had to be repeated. Her directness was ever a delight: "Why don't they look o-pressed?" she asked of the crowds in Petticoat Lane. She was a tireless cor-

there early in 1946. Virginia was a warm-hearted, happy-go-lucky sort of person whose domestic arrangements always seemed to be slightly askew. One of her four daughters would often come over saying, "Mamma has run out of sugar. Could you please fill up this cup for her?" It was not that she was a sponger. She was just not very well organised. Her daughters reflected this. She said to one of them, "Tilla, you look as though you have just come out of a documentary".

She often had British guests staying with her. During the war Churchill's nephew Esmond Romilly and his wife Jessica Mifflord made a temporary home there. Romilly went off to the war and was killed in 1941. Decca moved to California, remarried, and became the highly successful author of such books as *Hons and Rebels* and *The American Way of Death*, which exposed malfeasance in the US undertaking business.

Four of us neighbours, Clifford Durr, Charles Kindelberger (who later had a major role in the Marshall Plan), Bill Livingston of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation and I, used to take turns to drive the eight miles or so into Washington. Cliff had been a Rhodes Scholar and loved to reminisce about Oxford. As a leading member of the Federal Communications Commission he was vigilant in making American radio stations honour the public service pledges on which they had been awarded the franchise to broadcast. Such obligations have long since gone by the board.

When it was Cliff's turn to provide the car Virginia would happily borrow a vehicle from one of the other neighbours to do her shopping. She kept a horse, which her daughters used to ride, and a rather fierce rooster which frightened my eldest son. There were always political gatherings taking place at the Durrs. Her brother-in-law Hugo Black, a Justice of the Supreme Court, was frequently present and so was Lyndon Johnson, then a freshman senator. She was a very stimulating neighbour.

Virginia Heard Foster, civil rights activist born Birmingham, Alabama 6 August 1903; married 1926 Clifford Durr (died 1975); four daughters, and one son deceased; died Carlisle, Pennsylvania 24 February 1999.

ANDREW D. ROBERTS

Virginia and Clifford Durr were my next-door neighbours on Sedgwick Hill, outside Alexandria, Virginia, writes Leonard Miall, when I went to live

Assured, outspoken and funny, she often seemed to her friends to constitute the most effective left-wing movement in America

Court ruled in favour of Mrs Parks. The Durrs were shunned by almost all their white neighbours. Cliff's practice - which he kept going until 1965 - was sustained by clients who mostly could not pay. Yet increasingly the Durrs were sought out by curious and admiring outsiders, including several British graduate students. For certain Northern activists, Virginia's feelings were ambivalent. Brave and bright they might be, but too often they treated the Durr home as just a free hotel - and, after all, they could always fly out to safety.

By the late 1960s desegregation in the South was far advanced, but for Virginia the end of one struggle was the beginning of another. Votes for all seemed only to entrench the demagogue George Wallace, while black students seemed indifferent to the efforts of their elders, and cynical about the state as a possible force for good. All the time, life for

respondent, mingling hard personal questions with political comment that became ever more scathing as the US and Britain lurched to the right.

In summer, Durr held court on Martha's Vineyard, in the house of her daughter Lucy and son-in-law Sheldon Hackney. It was there she celebrated her 90th birthday, "in the pink", surrounded by a host of friends and descendants: she had 11 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren. Past battles were fondly recalled and Virginia Durr herself took the starring role in a high-powered seminar on Democracy and Equality. Few people, surely, have lived this century so fully.

GAZETTE

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh attend the Commonwealth Day Observance at Westminster Abbey, London SW1, and attend a reception at Marlborough House, London SW1, to mark Commonwealth Day and to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the modern Commonwealth. The Prince of Wales, on official visits to Argentina, Uruguay and the Falkland Islands. The Duke of York attends a dinner to mark the opening of the Nats Conference at the Royal United Services Institute, London SW1. The Princess Royal visits Japan, Philippines and New Zealand.

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment attends the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am; 1st Battalion Coldstream Guards attends the Queen's Guard, at Buckingham Palace, 11.30am, hand provided by the Coldstream Guards.

Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births, Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Memorials etc., etc., Wedding anniversaries. In memoriam) are charged at £5.30 a line (VAT extra).

BIRTHDAYS

Maj-Gen Sir Christopher Airy, former private secretary to the Prince and Princess of Wales, 65; Professor Charles Boxer, historian, linguist and writer, 95; Mr Gyles Brandreth, journalist and broadcaster, 51; Sir Julian Bullard, former ambassador to West Germany, 71; Professor Sir Donald Campbell, former President, Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow, 68; Sir Anthony Caro, sculptor, 75; Miss Cyd Charisse, actress and dancer, 78; Major Graham Dunnet, Lord-Lieutenant of Caithness, 70; Mr Phil Edmonds, cricketer, 48; Mr Michael Grade, former chief executive of Channel Four Television, 56; Miss Eileen Hertie, actress, 78; Lord Hurd of Westwell, former government minister, 69; Mr Michael Inchbald, interior

designer, 79; Miss Ann Jenner, ballerina, 55; Mr Gary Numan, rock musician, 41; Mr Mark Oaten MP, 35; Miss Lynn Redgrave, actress, 56; Dr Jonathan Sacks, Chief Rabbi, 51; Miss Lynn Seymour, ballerina, 60; Professor Stephen Smith, gynaecologist, 48; Professor Norman Stowe, modern historian, 58; Mr Robert Tear, operatic tenor, 60; Miss Claire Trevor, actress, 90; Mr David Wilkie, Olympic swimmer, 45.

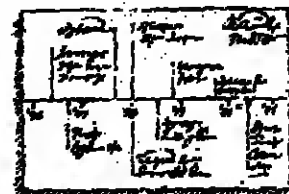
ANNIVERSARIES

Births: Kenneth Grahame, writer, 1859; Frederic William Goudy, printer and typographer, 1865; Leonard Alfred George Strong, novelist, poet and playwright, 1896. Deaths: Abraham Darby, ironfounder, 1717; Sir William Chambers, architect, 1796; Louis-Hector Berlioz, com-

poser, 1869; Count Ferdinand Adolf August Heinrich von Zeppelin, soldier and inventor, 1917; Sherwood Anderson, writer, 1941; Sir Thomas Beecham BT, conductor, 1961; Richard Austen Butler, Baron Butler of Saffron Walden, statesman, 1982; Alan Tindal Lennox-Boyd, first Viscount Boyd of Merton, statesman, accidentally killed 1983; Sir William Turner Walton, composer, 1983. On this day: the "February" Revolution (Old Style date) began in Russia at Petrograd, 1917; Mahatma Gandhi started a civil disobedience campaign in India, 1930; the Soviet Union claimed to be the possessor of the atomic bomb, 1950; the US landed 3,500 marines in South Vietnam, 1965; in Dublin, the Nelson Column was destroyed by an IRA bomb, 1966. Today is the Feast Day of St Duthac, St Felix of Dunwich, St Humphrey or Hunfrid, St

LECTURES

Victoria and Albert Museum: Sharon Fernor, "Italian Baroque Sculpture: Bernini drawings", 2pm. British Museum: Carolyn Peix, "Portrayal of Women in the John Addis Islamic Gallery", 11.30am. Wallace Collection, London W1: Graia Lyster, "Flemish Paintings", 1pm. Royal Holloway, Egham, Surrey: Professor Clare Bradley, "Health Psychology", 5.30pm. Royal Academy of Arts, at the Society of Antiquaries, London W1: Professor John House, "Techniques of Monet's Late Work", 1pm.



HISTORICAL NOTES

KEITH HELLER

Time does not distort reality. Life does

AT ONE time or another, we must have all felt that we were born into the wrong era. We pine for the false simplicity of the past or yearn for a feature of infinite possibilities. This is why we read fiction, to expand if only for a moment the terrible literalness of our daily lives.

For some unfortunate, however, circumstances leave them wondering if they might not have strayed into the wrong life altogether. Foremost among these must have been Dr Johnson's hapless friend Richard Savage, "born", according to Johnson, "with a legal claim to honour and to affluence" as the illegitimate son of the fourth Earl Rivers by the Countess of Macclesfield. Savage descended into a short life of hardship and confusion. After an orphaned youth, he followed the literary profession with only limited success and finally died in a debtor's prison. Most of his days, he could well have echoed Gerard Manley Hopkins' later complaint, "Why must disappointment all I endeavour and?"

And never more so than on the night of Monday 20 November 1727, when Savage and two associates stopped in at Robinson's coffee-house near Charing Cross, Rushing into a room that was just being vacated, the newcomers sparked a quarrel with the departing guests. In the succeeding mêlée, Savage's sword somehow found its way through the belly of one

James Sinclair. The victim fell to the floor, crying, "I am a dead man, and was stabbed cowardly." By mid-December, Richard Savage stood in the Old Bailey, declared guilty of murder. If it had not been for the royal pardon arranged by his important friends, history might have recalled the poet more as a common bully than as a tragic idler.

Yet, as Clarence Tracy notes in his book *The Artful Bastard*, Savage "has become a legend rather than an historical fact". The killing, along with the celebrated trial, has remained as conjectural as the attack on Christopher Marlowe in Deptford. Random violence so often blurs everything within its reach. And when the defendant's supporters included none other than the Great Cham himself, it was no wonder that the event should have been transformed by its retelling. Johnson's account, the earliest of his great *Lives of the Poets*, was frankly biased, yet became over time all but factual. He concluded that Savage was a "modest, inoffensive man, not inclined to brols or to insolence" and, therefore, deserving of mercy, if not outright exoneration. More recently, Richard Holmes has argued that Johnson suppressed evidence and betrayed the biographer's code. Yet even he is forced to admit that it was one of Savage's companions, William Merchant, who triggered the confrontation, and that there

were plenty of inconsistencies in the depositions. What truly happened that night may lie for ever beyond our knowing.

When I decided to use his incident in my book about a 13th-century watchman named George Man, it was precisely these uncertainties that I most wanted to exploit. Time, I reasoned, does not distort reality. Life distorts reality. If even Savage's contemporaries were divided on their facts and memories, we of later ages need feel no misgivings about letting our imaginations recast the scenario. Altered definitions, shifted points of view, extrapolated behaviour - these are legitimate devices for the novelist to use in an effort to recreate a past that would otherwise be lost to us. He must of course, keep faith with the sights, tastes, and thoughts of the times. But, if he does, he may very well capture what eluded even the participants and eyewitnesses themselves, the natural ambiguity of life as fickle as quicksilver.

In his poetical satire *On False Historians*, Savage writes of "romantic" tale-tellers that "stead of history, such authors raise / Mere, crude, wild novels of bad hints for plays". I trust that, given all his own failings, he would not have judged my version of his life too harshly.

Keith Heller is the author of *Man's Loving Family* (Headline, £5.99)

CASE SUMMARIES

8 MARCH 1999

THE FOLLOWING notes of judgments were prepared by the reporters of the *All England Law Reports*.

Practice

Commissioners of Customs and Excise v Anchor Foods Ltd; Ch D (Neuberger J) 26 February 1999.

A MAREVA injunction to restrain the defendant from selling or disposing of its assets was granted on the condition that a cross-undertaking in damages was provided. Although the purpose of the Mareva jurisdiction was to afford protection to a claimant with a good arguable case and not to impede or interfere with an ordinary bona fide business transaction, the court was satisfied that justice and convenience would best be served if an injunction was granted.

Richard McCombe QC, Paul Givon, Amanda Tipples (Sole for Customs and Excise) for the commissioners; David Pannick QC, Adam Lewis, Sandra Bristol (Dobb Lupton Alsop) for the defendant.

Costs

Tate v Hart; CA (Auld, Sedley LJ) 1 March 1999.

WHERE A court found that, in appealing against a wasted costs order, solicitors had not been in breach of the Civil Legal Aid (General) Regulations 1989, the wasted costs order should not have been upheld on the basis that they had acted either unreasonably or negligently as defined in the notes to RSC Ord 62, r 11(2). The court was wrong to impose an extra obligation which was not found to be imposed by the regulations, and to have that duty upon

some higher standard founded on a concept of unreasonableness or negligence, especially where the making of a punitive order such as a wasted costs order was involved.

Alan Evans (Krivinkas & Co, Manchester) for the plaintiff; Paul Creamer (Blonsdale & Co, Whitehaven) for the defendant.

Sentencing

R v Brown and ors; CA, Crim Div (Auld LJ, Forbes, David Steel JJ) 3 Feb 1999.

WHILST SUBSTANTIAL sentences were justified for offences of conspiracy to pervert the course of justice and conspiracy to corrupt a police officer because of the impact of such offences on the criminal justice system, a starting point of 13 years' imprisonment was far too high, even where a defendant who was a former police officer had used know-how and contacts gained during his time in the police force in committing a pattern of serious offences.

John Hughes QC, Anne Johnston (Registrar of Criminal Appeals) for Brown; Graham Benson (Registrar of Criminal Appeals) for King; Sasha Weiss (Registrar of Criminal Appeals) for Mahoney.

Limitation

Coulthard v Disce Mix Club Ltd and ors; Ch D (Jules Sher QC) sitting as a deputy High Court judge 1 March 1999.

NO DISTINCTION could be made with regard to limitation between a common law action for damages for fraud and its counterpart in equity based on the same facts. The statute of limitations applied by analogy where there was a "correspondence" between the remedies available at law

or in equity, even if the equitable relief was wider than that available at law.

Stephen Bate (Jordans) for the plaintiff; Adrian Speck (Wiggins & Co) for the defendants.

Pensions

Bus Employees Pension Trustees Ltd and ors v Harrod and ors; NBC Pension Trustees Ltd and ors v Padlock and ors; Ch D (Sir Richard Scott VC) 2 March 1999.

THE STATUTORY definitions and provisions in the Pension Schemes Act 1993 and the Pensions Act 1995 did not apply to a scheme which was in the process of being wound up. A case in which the winding up had apparently been completed and the members had apparently been paid off accordingly did not fall within the meaning of occupational pension scheme in s 1 of the 1993 Act.

Michael Tennet (Taylor Joynton Garrett) for the plaintiff; Michael Furness (Baker & McKenzie) for the first and second defendants.

Dangerous dog

Cummings v DPP; QBD, Div Ct (Kennedy LJ, Beldfield J) 26 Feb 1999.

WHERE AN attack by a dog which was dangerously out of control took place on land which was not in the ownership of the dog owner but of the local council, evidence of public user did not have to be adduced, since it could be inferred. In the present case the justices had been entitled on the evidence to find that the dogs were dangerously out of control in a public place.

R Crampin (Singh & Choudhry) for the appellant; John McCrumness (CPS) for the respondent.

WORDS

CHRISTOPHER HAWTREE

personal, adj.

as in railway guards' recent, airline-like reminder that "customers" should take all their "personal belongings" at the next "station

stop" - rather than leap out midway with somebody else's stuff.

Meanwhile, I steel myself to hear a recent disc not mentioned by Mellor: David Briggs's version of Mahler's Fifth for the organ at Gloucester Cathedral. And why not? Mahler made piano-rolls of other symphonies - preferable to the Boulez discs.

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And for our next cunning plan

The South Bank is looking for yet another scheme that will rejuvenate the world's biggest arts complex. By James Fisher

A little less than a year after the farce that ended the ambitious plan by Richard Rogers to put a glass roof over the entire South Bank Centre, the complex is following the showbiz maxim to pick itself up, dust itself down and start all over again.

This week sees the announcement of a shortlist for a new master planner in what will be the third formal attempt to sort out the problems that bedevil the centre.

The South Bank may be Britain's largest arts complex, but it was not planned that way. It grew up in an *ad hoc* fashion after the Royal Festival Hall was completed for the 1961 Festival of Britain, and despite the Sixties' bid to impose structure on it with raised walkways, its nature still shows. To call it a 'centre' at all is optimistic – rather, it is a collection of different arts venues.

In the Eighties, the architect Terry Farrell was in charge of the first attempt, drawing up proposals that would have paid for improved arts facilities by commercialising the centre; in the Nineties, Rogers and the lottery seemed to offer a route, which would have allowed the South Bank to modernise without compromising. Both came to nothing.

After the failed attempts by two of Britain's leading architects and £2m of lottery funding down the drain, it is time to call a halt to the idea that a "grand project" solution can be found for the South Bank; time to make the best of what's there, clean up and move on.

Apparently not, if you read the centre's commission brief for a new master planner. On the face of it this is a bold statement of intent, an announcement of another fresh start that involves possible demolition and replacement of the Hayward Gallery, the Queen Elizabeth Hall and the Purcell Room. Out with the expensive glass roof, in with costly new buildings.

But the South Bank Centre argues that its new plan is something of a third way – neither a grand project, nor papering over the cracks. Bold, but affordable.

When the Rogers plan collapsed last year, the culture secretary, Chris Smith, became involved and called for a back-to-basics approach at the South Bank. A new chief executive, the property developer Elliot Sperner, was appointed to examine the issues and come up with a new way forward. His approach is underpinned by three basic tenets: what money is available, what money can be got and what can be built with it. The word "pragmatic" is one that comes readily to the lips of South Bank people these days. "It's a pragmatic approach: what buildings we need, what buildings we can afford. It is an exercise in measuring blocks of space, rather than a grand vision," says one. To further this aim, the centre hired Britain's leading process-oriented space-measurer, Dr Frank Duffy, to draw up a brief for the competition to choose the new master planner. Duffy, chairman of the planning and architecture firm DEGW, says the latest approach is "more about managing the process" than previous attempts.


"My idea of urban design is that it is rooted in politics and economics, as well as spatial relationships and architecture. And this is not a very British idea," Duffy, who trained in America, says it was crucial to separate the job of the master planner (making sure the project is achievable) from that of the architects (responsible for the design of individual buildings). "The problem with Rogers' approach is that it became a mega-structure. This time, the project will be delivered stage by stage, while the show goes on, and each new stage will deliver a better service to the public," he argues.

And this gets to the heart of the South Bank's problem, third time round. Rogers' glass roof had its critics, but it also had a bold vision. Pragmatism and process may well be New Labour, but they are not very exciting. And the centre badly needs to generate some kind of buzz around the project.

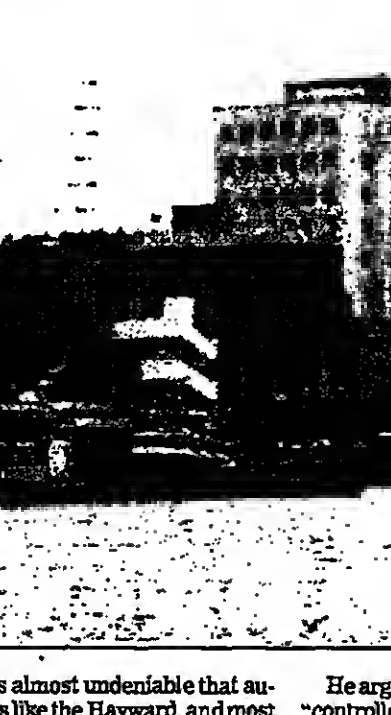
There is also a sense that the moment may have passed. Rogers' project could have opened at the start of the next century, or coincided with the 50th anniversary of the Festival of Britain. Now it may be five years before anything new happens at the South Bank Centre – 2004 and the 53rd anniversary don't have quite the same resonance.

What excitement there is comes in the form of expanded film facilities on the site: the British Film Institute plans to sell its West End headquarters and move to the South Bank. The sale will raise enough money to build a new headquarters and a National Film & Television School, and enlarge the National Film Theatre and the Museum of the Moving Image. Excitement also comes in the "radical" idea of demolishing the still-controversial Sixties buildings at the heart of the centre – the Queen Elizabeth Hall, the Purcell Room and the Hayward Gallery. But even this will not be straightforward.

The often impractical concrete buildings have their admirers, who oppose demolition. Both English Heritage and the Twentieth Century Society have argued that they should be listed to protect them against wholesale redevelopment. Twentieth Century Society's consultant director, Ken Powell, says: "We are very alarmed. The Arts Council, culture secretary, South Bank board – everyone seems to be ganging up on the Sixties buildings."



Above: Richard Rogers plan for a glass roof



"It is almost undeniable that audiences like the Hayward, and most people accept that it and the other buildings could be retained and modernised. We want to emphasise that they are very good resources and have potential."

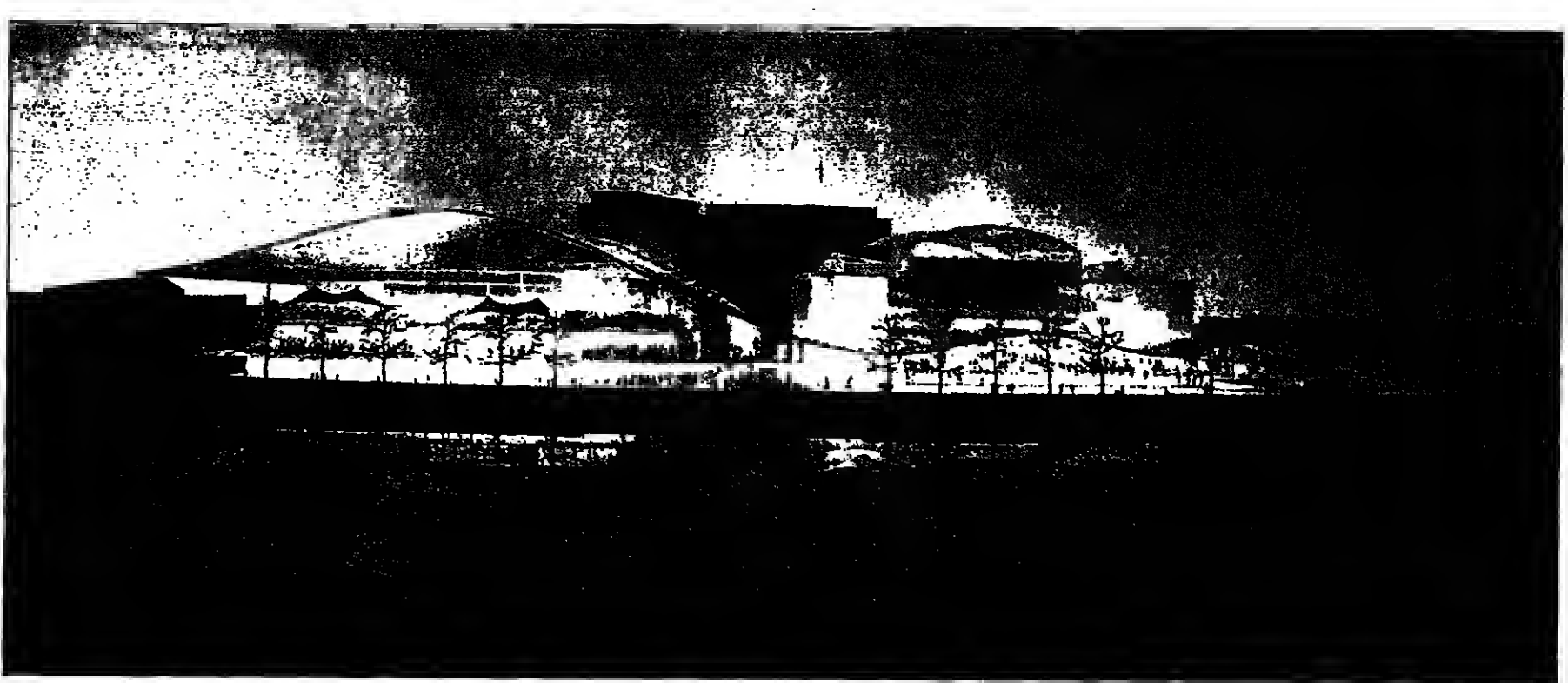
Powell admits that the buildings' external appearance does not help their cause, but cites the nearby National Theatre as an example of how cleaning and lighting a Sixties concrete building can improve it.

He argues that "controlled chaos" at the South Bank, where cafés, restaurants, a multiplex cinema are coming in more people to the South Bank. He is more cautious about the other buildings, saying they "exclude the possibility. He compares the Pyramids - big with not much

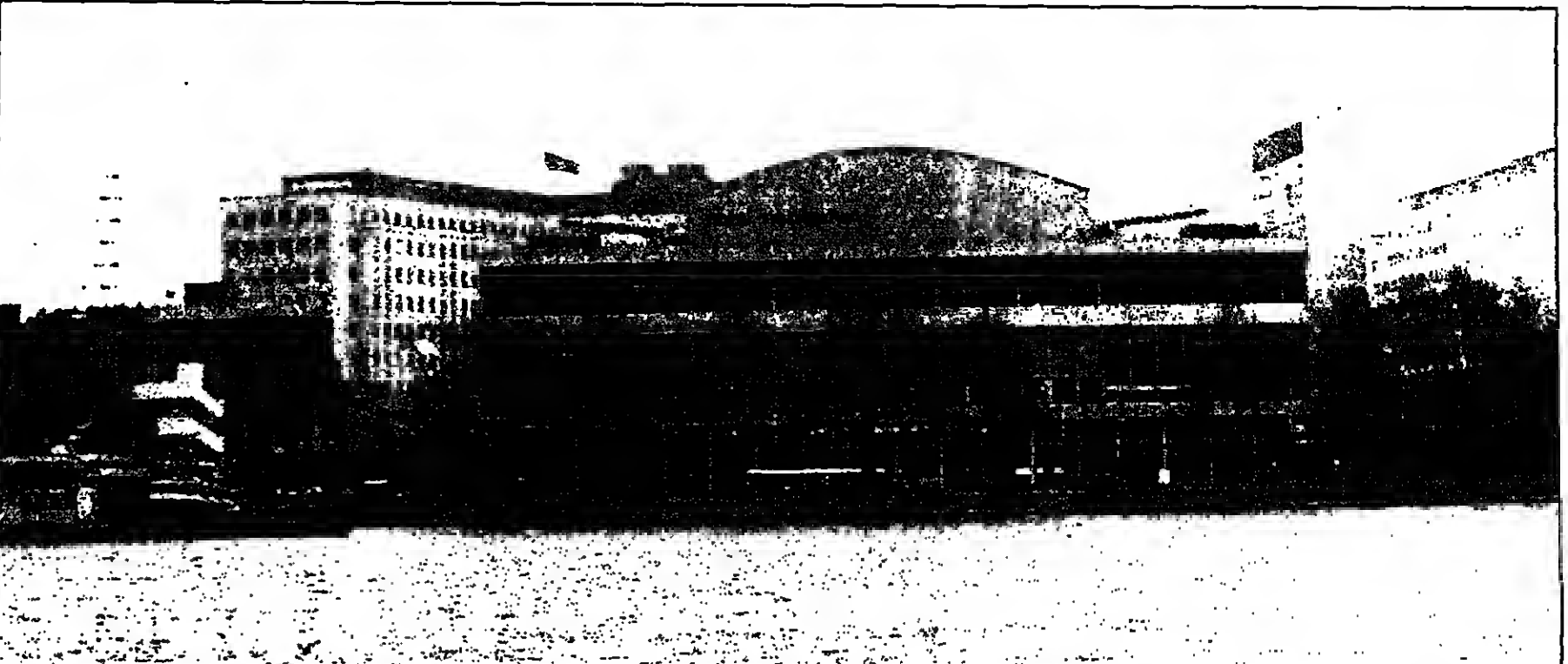
over the South Bank was rejected and below, the concrete

at there is a need for "change" in developing the park, but accepts that it is not even a multi-important for bringing people. Unlike others on the team, Frank Duffy is about the Sixties that he would "not" compares them to the on the outside but space inside. They were built without any attention being paid to the artistic programme, he adds.

As an arts resource, the South Bank is probably unique in the number of different agencies it is saddled with pleasing, each with conflicting interests. The Arts Council, English Heritage, Lambeth Council, the Royal Fine Art Commission, the Arts Council Lottery Fund, the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport all have a say in this question of summation and transformation to meet the needs of the subject is the London World Centre.



Above: Richard Rogers plan for a glass roof over the South Bank was rejected and below, the concrete complex which has its admirers *PA/Peter Cook*



Green vision where once the car was king

On the site of an historic automobile factory, Paris is planning a virtually car-free re-development. By Claire Soares

IN 1896 Louis Renault built his first car in a workshop on the Ile Seguin, west of Paris. A hundred and one years later the island, the last undeveloped site in Greater Paris, is to be a virtually car-free zone.

The historic Renault factory, the driving force and the symbol of French industry for much of this century, is to make way for this new, "green" urbanisation. The factory was often thought of as an indicator of the health of French industry. "When Billancourt comes down with a cold, all France coughs," the saying went. As the largest factory close to central Paris, its employees played a pivotal role in the May 1968 uprisings. Jean-Paul Sartre even addressed a meeting at the factory gates.

The land is an architect's dream in terms of location, size and opportunity. It covers 70 hectares (approximately the size of the Ile de la Cité in central Paris) and all its existing buildings, once the cutting edge of the European car industry, are due to be demolished.

Bruno Fortier, 48, is the architect who won the three-hour race to redesign the new island, and areas of land on the river banks on either side, at Meudon and Boulogne-Billancourt. The factory, closed since 1974, now looks forlorn, "a huge empty carcass" in Fortier's words. It will be knocked down to make way for small clusters of offices and residential buildings among green parks.

Fortier, whose other projects include developing Nantes

town centre and the area around the TGV train station in Marseilles, was the preferred candidate of Jean-Pierre Fourcade, mayor of Boulogne-Billancourt, and when the three plans were put to a local referendum his came top of the poll with 57 per cent of the votes.

Talking to *The Independent*, Fortier explains the appeal of his design. "I have tried not to devote everything to buildings and construction, but on the contrary to create a breathing-space by freeing the banks from traffic and creating numerous green spaces."

"The presence of cars along the banks of the Seine in the centre of Paris is hellish. What I wanted to do was to divert the traffic into the built-up areas and liberate the banks, as the Boulevard St Germain does in the sixth arrondissement." So on the Boulogne-Billancourt bank Fortier has ensured that traffic passes through the centre of the town, and has created a pedestrian walkway alongside the river.

On the island itself, the architect has "kept vehicles to a minimum". The north side has a small road at ground level but on the south side traffic goes underground. All car parks will be situated beneath the buildings. The outer periphery is a green trail reserved for pedestrians and cyclists.

Fortier concedes that "it will take great determination to ensure that these plans are executed. The features that have attracted people, are the very ones that frighten them. They

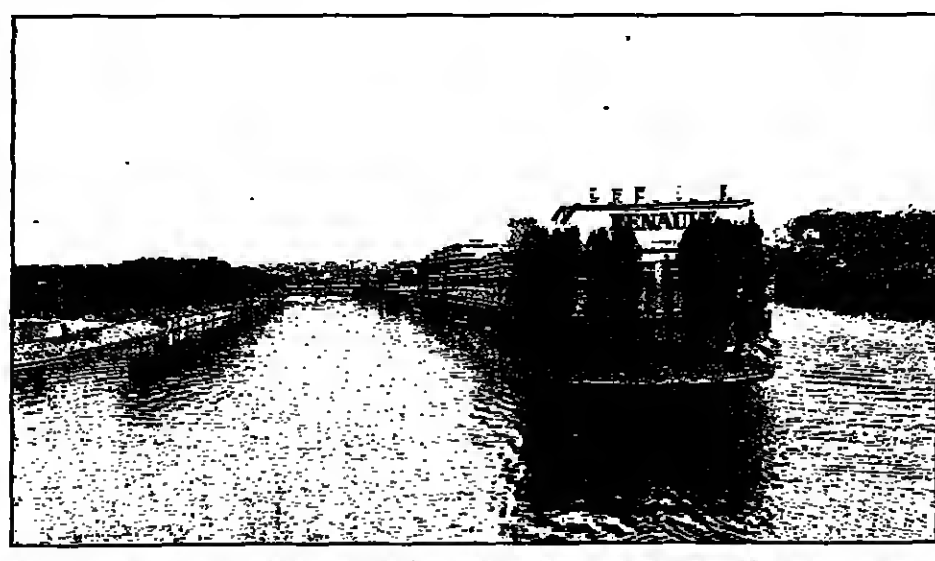
Above: The Renault factory on the Île Seguin, once the trial success. Below: an impression of the island devoted

like the idea of having tranquil footpaths alongside the river but they worry about the traffic and the noise from the diverted roads through the town".

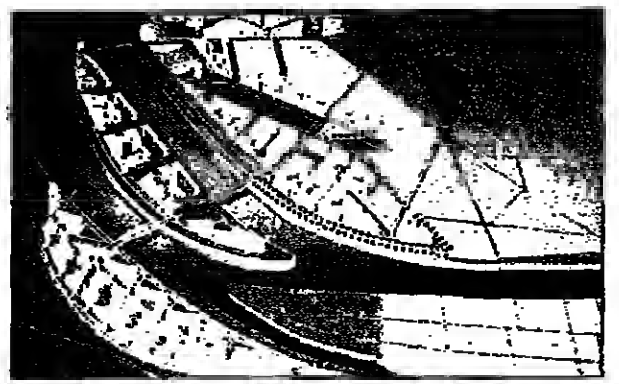
The residents of Boulogne-Billancourt will have a new park by way of compensation.

In this respect Fortier's project is original, in that the park runs parallel to the Seine. "There is a habit in Paris to build parks perpendicular to the Seine, such as the Champs de Mars near the Eiffel Tower, but I decided to opt for a par-

The epitome of French industrialism
Rex Features



Above: The Renault factory on the Île Seguin, once the epitome of French industrial success. Below: an impression of the island development *Rex Features*



all park that mirrors the magnificent Parc de Saint-Cloud on the opposite hill".

The Communist contingent of the local council are dismayed that environmental considerations are outweighing industrial ones. The Communist vice-president of the regional council for urban development, Jocelyne Riou, explained: "Fortier's project puts too much emphasis on the environment and the standard of living, without realising that the latter is dependent on jobs."

Fortier counters this by saying that it has not yet been decided what will go into the new buildings, so the number of jobs to be created is unknown.

There has been talk of the island being used as the Olympic

the buildings are further proof that Fortier's project has been put together with the pedestrian in mind. "I would like those who walk around the Ile Seguin in 2015 to appreciate it and hope that the area becomes truly memorable".

However, there are still obstacles to be overcome: the old factory site must be cleaned, a new bridge is to be built, and Fortier must battle to retain what he regards as the key features of his proposal.

And money. At a time when the state is trying to redress the imbalance within Paris, it will be difficult for a site located in the already rich west to procure funds, when projects in the poorer northern and eastern areas of the city are a priority.



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The one that got away

John Neville could have been up there with Sir Ian and Dame Judi as a Great British Thesp. But instead he ended up in Canada, and in *The X-Files*. Does he have any regrets about the past? By Daniel Rosenthal

John Neville is the working-class London boy who became one of the great idols of postwar British theatre. No, he's not, he's one of Canada's most resourceful artistic directors. Wait a moment, isn't he that guy known to millions of TV viewers as Well-Manicured Man from *The X-Files*?

In fact, he's all three. And for this week only he has a fourth label: erstwhile local hero enjoying a sentimental return to Nottingham. Neville has flown in from his home in Toronto to give three performances of *Krapp's Last Tape*, part of his 50th-anniversary season at Nottingham Playhouse, the theatre which he ran, with great success and satisfaction, from 1963 to 1968.

In jeans and black X-Files jacket, Neville looks a good deal younger than his 53 years. It's an age at which he might be forgiven for shirking risky challenges, such as having to hold an 800-strong audience single-handed as Krapp, the elderly Beckett hero effecting on a life measured out in tape pools. So why do it? It's partly because I wanted to be involved in the anniversary, he says, "and partly because of the wonderful writing, so thick and deep."

"But I'm in a paradoxical situation. A year ago in Toronto I did Brian Friel's *Molly Sweeney*, which is all monologues. You sit there with the other actors, waiting for your cue, and then you're on for four ages. Right throughout the run I ever stopped being scared, and I said I'm never doing that again. But now here I am in something even more exposing."

Like Krapp's memories, Neville's feelings on revisiting Nottingham after 30 years are tinged with sadness at how things change. "I can barely recognise the city. My beloved Pringle's Picture Palace, the cinema which was the Playhouse's first home and in which I played *Macbeth*, is now a Fikih pub, but was a terrible shock."

"Theatre in England has changed so much, too. I'm a Canadian citizen now and it's not for me to criticise my old country. But I ran a permanent company at the Playhouse, in repertory, and it's a great shame that that approach has disappeared - though I'm glad it's starting at the National. Too many young actors in Britain are just waiting by the telephone for a puny role in mediocre television."

His decision to take over as Playhouse director in 1963 caused a sensation far greater than the one

that greeted the recent temporary defection of Ian McKellen (ironically a Neville protégé) from London to Leeds. Back then, actors could be superstars without doing film or television and Neville, who rejected a seven-year Hollywood contract to dedicate himself to Shakespeare, was among the most famous. He and his great friend Richard Burton were the twin heart-throbs of the Old Vic company in the Fifties.

"We were idols," Neville says matter-of-factly, "and after shows would each have our own set of fans stretching down the Waterloo Road." When he cut short a triumphant West End run in the original production of *Alfie* and declared that he was heading for the Midlands "to get away from the pernicious idea that only the best should be in London", the press said he was crazy.

He not only played leading roles there (including Willy Loman in *Death of a Salesman*) he also directed Robert Ryan as Othello and the young Judi Dench as Saint Joan.

He speaks with equal pride of the Saturday morning youth club he started so as to build stronger community links: "We had 17-year-old miners playing

trolls in scenes from *Peer Gynt*." His childhood was spent in Willesden, north London, where his father was a motor mechanic and lorry driver. "We were quite poor and very, very working-class."

He was about to enter Rada in 1942 when his call-up papers arrived. For the remainder of the war he was a Royal Navy signaller, serving on battleships during the Normandy landings while simultaneously "training myself to lose my cockney accent, so that I could go home and do the classics".

At Rada, after he was demobbed, his accent was replaced by patrician vowels, but his father's values remained. "He always said 'You don't buy anything, son, unless you've got the coppers in your pocket'." That governed his attitude to running theatres and helped him to ease a \$4.5m (£2.8m) deficit at Stratford Ontario, one of the three major Canadian theatres of which he was artistic director between 1973 and 1988.

He had decided to emigrate because he found the "can-do" mentality in the country's theatres "wildly exciting". He detects that same spirit in the students he directs in Toronto. They, of course, know him primarily through *The X-Files*, and rib him about the Well-Manicured Man's role as part of the

shady committee that is in league with the aliens.

"I was originally meant to be in just two episodes, but the character was regularly brought back, because the audience simply doesn't know if he stands for good or evil. It's a mark of his professionalism that he can invest a line from *The X-Files* movie like 'We are nothing but digests for the creation of a new race of alien life forms' with as much gravitas as he would a soliloquy from *Richard II*, the play that



John Neville: 'As I get older, the standards I set myself don't get lower, they get higher'

Doug Markle/Page One

earned him his finest reviews.

Seeing him acting opposite David Duchovny, or in a recent TV showing of *The Adventures of Baron Münchhausen* - "six very tough months" - sets you thinking what might have happened if he'd stayed in Britain. Dench and McKellen have become Sir Ian and Dame Judi. Would he have become Sir John, ranked alongside Paul Scofield as one of our greatest theatre veterans?

"People have said that about the

knighthood, but who knows? I have no regrets."

He does have thoughts of retirement. "Krapp may well be my last stage appearance. As I get older, the standards I set myself get higher - and I fall further short of them than I ever dreamed. I hate that. Acting's been my life. I've been successful and, at times, good at it, but now I'd sooner put my energy into directing."

There are plenty of plays he wants to stage. "Plays like *The Revenger's Tragedy* that a lot of

people don't want to do," he says, enthusiastically. "I'm not a career director; I do plays because I have things to say about them and because one is supposed to stage things not to guarantee good box office but to challenge the audience. I won't give up until I drop."

'Krapp's Last Tape' is at Nottingham Playhouse (0115-941 9419) from 11 to 13 March; 'The X-Files' movie is available to buy on video from 29 March

Big in Iceland

POP
GUS GUS
ULU
LONDON

SINCE THE umpteenth-piece Icelandic pop-group-cum-art-installation Gus Gus broke cover a couple of years ago, the only area in which they have displayed any consistency has been their insistence on wildly inaccurate album titles. Their 1997 debut was called *Polydistortion*, but was a collection of songs as clean, sleek and modern as cruise missiles; the imminent, and terrific, follow-up, *This Is Normal*, is every bit as ordinary and commonplace as a rhinoceros on a skateboard.

Unpredictability is not always a good thing, especially when what you were doing was already different. When they headlined this venue on their last visit to London, they heavily emphasised the visual component of their work, at times shrouding the band's members almost to the point of invisibility. Tonight, in a performance based largely around the new album, the films on the backdrop remain, but Gus Gus are for the most part brightly lit and, by their previous aloof standards, surprisingly animated.

Gus Gus's records, much like those of Massive Attack, are best thought of as dance music you're not really supposed to dance to. On *This Is Normal* Gus Gus use the beats and hieps of the techno palette to create atmospheres of a subtlety and depth that are at odds with the usual emotional worthlessness of the genre.

Strange, then, that the singers Daniel Agust and Hafdis Huld have picked this moment to forsake the severe black garb and diffident cool that have hitherto been their standard, for colourful attire, immovable smiles and an awful lot of jumping up and down and waving their hands in the air.

Sometimes, it seems appropriate - the new single, "Ladyshave", is an irresistibly funky pop moment and features unabashed use of that definitive Eighties relic, the shoulder-slung keyboard. Another of the new songs is interrupted by a robotic rap appropriated from Abba's "On and On and On" - which, again, is not the time or the place for imperious arty remove, and Gus Gus should certainly continue to explore this more frivolous side, especially if it's going to produce more singles like "Ladyshave".

Tonight, unfortunately, they rather overdo it - the latter half of the show degenerates into a slew of long, beat-heavy tracks barely distinguishable from each other, and the stage begins to look like an aerobics class.

Gus Gus have it in them to be one of the best reasons for turning up for the new decade, but a balance needs to be located between grave and rave.

ANDREW MUELLER

Give it a little more fizz, lads

ONLY the excesses for which Kula Shaker have had their career derailed are even half true. They've been called misogynists, even Nazis, since the singer/lyricist Crispian Mills opened his mouth one too often about his beloved, romanticised India, ill-advisedly offering to reclaim the swastika - and their crimes. But before that, he'd talked of spiritual revolution, of on-asking millennial crisis, of the atchouli aristocracy tones appropriate to Hayley Mills's son, he seemed ready to want to change the world. That he hasn't, and that the romances of blistering early singles

such as "Hey Dude" has been broken too, is truly sad. Kula Shaker are so much less than they should be. The evidence is in every other lyric in this week of pre-tour shows at the tiny 100 Club, one-time home to hippies. Mills offers wispy prevarications, useless incitements: "Something's on my mind, but I don't want to talk about it" is typical of the patchy new album *Peasants, Pigs and Astronauts*. Perhaps it indicates a wavering of the revolutionary party line under media pressure. At any rate, in a spiritually apathetic age it's hardly a call to arms. And there's less excuse for the band's

musical refusal to progress. Too often, these dates seem not a winningly democratic gesture by a million-selling rock act, but their appropriate level, as reincarnations of a band second on the bill to the Small Faces, circa 1968.

There's no excitement, no sense of sweaty connection, as you'd get with bands with true devotees in this

POP
KULA SHAKER
100 CLUB
LONDON

setting. Instead, Mills leads his men to polite interest, with his own lack of charisma, as he lets his blond hair flop over his face, all too apparent. He speaks in an accent somewhere between Suggs and some ironic Mr. Showbiz, even when he's saying things he must believe: that 108 "is the secret number of love". Sometimes he holds his arms out, as if offering wisdom, or an embrace. But mostly, he's one of the boys. His band emphasises organ riffs, proving they're mods at heart. "Sound of Drums" adds laser blasts, updating their sound to 1976, but the crowd's chatter over "Mystical Machine

Guns" Indian chords shows that variety won't be encouraged. And yet, there are regular reminders why we're still here at all, why Kula Shaker haven't already been dumped in the post-Britpop bargain bin. As the guitars chop into "Hey Dude" and "Hush", memories of their early magic creep back. When the overture to a new age, the song "Hosannah", offers its tentative message over a gentle strum, escalating to an epic chorus, you can almost believe in them anew. But the crowd is already evaporating. No one wants an encore, not today.

NICK HASTED



Crispian Mills: one of the boys

John Guntion

THIS WAS THE WEEK THAT WAS

Today On this day in 1988 scriptwriters of US soap operas went on strike, holding a gun to the heads of *Dallas*, *Dynasty* and other series. The bad news is that they went back to work.

Tomorrow In 1932, Pu Yi, the real life hero of the glossy movie *The Last Emperor*, was installed as provincial dictator of second division puppet state Manchukuo. A relegation for an Emperor who had sat on the Chinese throne aged two.

Wednesday High Tor, starring Bing Crosby and Julie Andrews, the first full-length feature film made for TV, was networked in the US in 1956.

Thursday After the death of her companion Lytton Strachey, the artist Dora Carrington died in 1932 from self-inflicted



'The Last Emperor'

gunshot wounds, not knowing that she would be reincarnated as Emma Thompson in the excellent *Carrington* scripted by Christopher Hampton.

Friday Mervyn Peake's only stage play, *The Wito to Woo*, went down like dry rot in Gormenghast Castle. Fortunately he did not give up his day job of writing the *Titus Groan* novel trilogy, later

dramatised on Radio 4 with Sting as chief villain.

Saturday Showing at a Paris music hall in 1894, *Yvette Goes to Bed* was the title of the first striptease on stage; subsequent artistic turns showed a young lady undressing for the doctor, for the bath, to keep cool and to uncover a flea about her person.

Sunday 14-year-old William Betty played the part of Hamlet so wonderfully that the Commons adjourned to allow honourable members to watch the performance, although the precocious prince was later hissed off the stage. Back in 1885, the words "Gilbert and Sullivan" were followed not by "George" but by "Sullivan"; *The Mikado* had its first night at the Savoy Theatre.

JONATHAN SALE

The return of the king

VERDI TOOK 30-plus curtain calls at the 1847 Florence premiere of *Macbeth*. It's easy to see why. Events cascaded with lightning speed. Macbeth and his lady understand each other instinctively. They evince few qualms. Carnage flows as night follows day: "What's done is done." Later, as the pace eases, the psychology intensifies, climaxing in the magnificent sleepwalking scene and what awaits him is revilement and oblivion. It is the ediles, lamenting their "wretched country" who will restore the light.

Literally so, for in Robert Chevara's production for English touring Opera - now celebrating its 20th season of imaginative, quality productions in medium-size venues - a brooding backdrop yields to a spall-like view of the Scottish mountains, as if to exorcise a nightmare. And so,

OPERA
MACBETH
ARTS THEATRE
CAMBRIDGE

indeed, it does. Throughout Act II, Anthony Marber's lean-visaged Macbeth grows in stature - first in a huddled, gripping husband-wife exchange of recitative, and later in the graphic Banquet scene, where Banquo's *Commendatore*-like ghost gory makes to embrace his killer. Soon he is curled in the Witches' embrace as, to Verdi's marvellously mocking low woodwind, Marber observes (through the audience) the parade of Banquo's descendants.

We know one of them: Fleance. His framing, backstage, is one of several moments when a spikily lit rear entrance is capitalised on to striking effect: that way lies Duncan's

chamber; it is filled, ghoulishly, by Banquo's spectre; and from here Sarah Rhodes's icy Lady Macbeth sidles for her awesome first aria ("Join me, husband") and shivering cabaletta ("Ye furies of darkness"). Andrew Porter's translation continually serves the production well. This *Macbeth* owed much not just to Chevara's keen eye for grouping, but to Dinah Collin's costuming and shrewd shadow-lighting from the inspired Giuseppe di Iorio. Curiously, less so in a slightly disparate Act I: the witches' scene lacked punch, and some greens and reds seemed faintly hack.

But things soon lifted. Banquo (Henry Waddington) was a dominating bass presence: notably his Act II aria ("See where the moon"), with beguiling murderers' chorus preceding Rhodes's Lady Macbeth, whose "This day" aria was the high-

point of Act I, delivered a breath-taking sleepwalk aria. Jeffrey Lloyd-Roberts brought superb voice and focused acting and pathos to Macduff. There were attractive vignettes from Eldridh Cyran-Jones (Lady-in-Waiting) and Justin Miles Olden (Malcolm). Di Iorio's artfully varied lighting and Chevara's gift for compact blocking (witches, murderers, and skilful Act I and II finales), at their best, held one mesmerised.

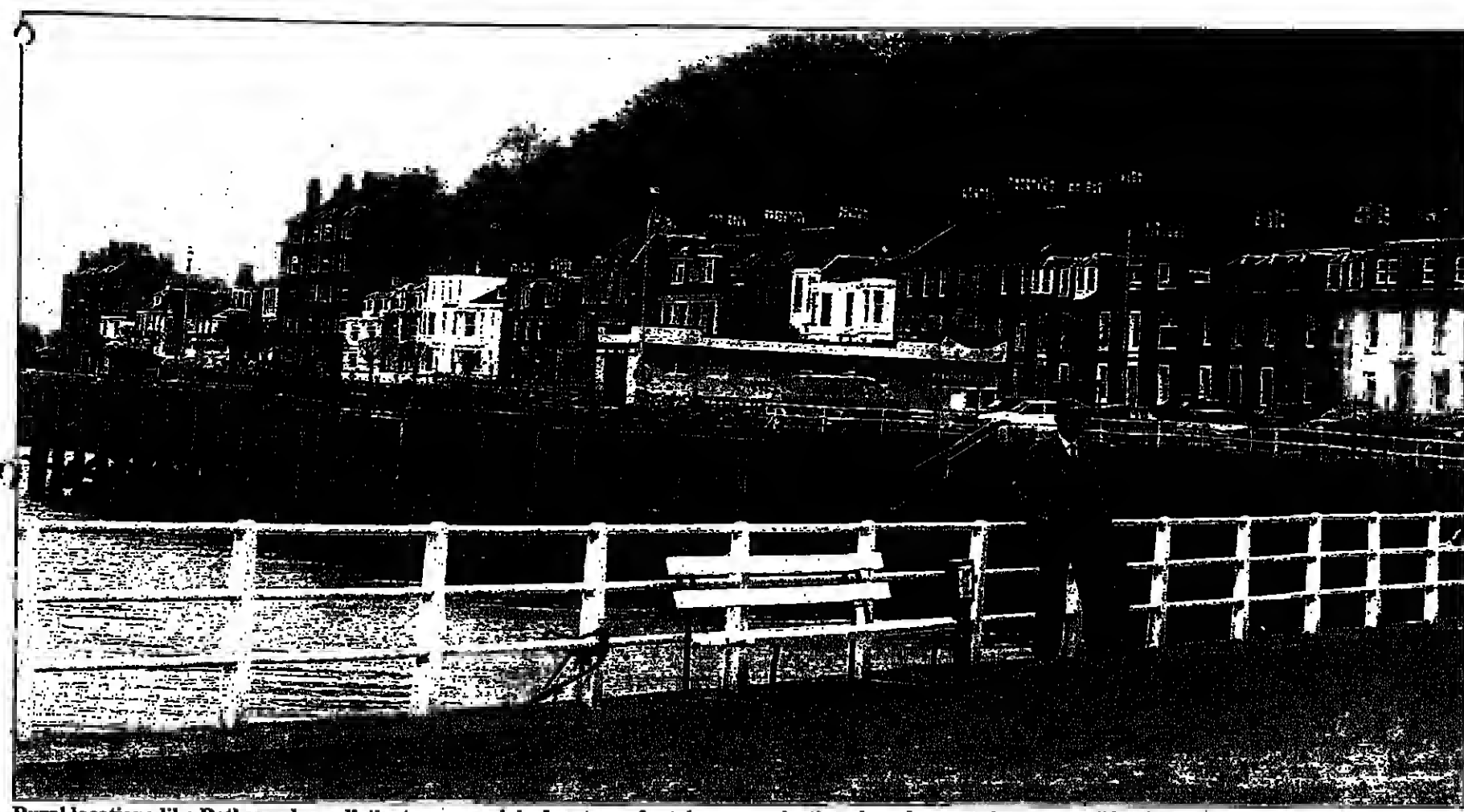
The ensemble soared to some massive Verdian climaxes, and the orchestra, from strings to snickering flutes to a blazing brass, repeatedly delivered for the music director, Andrew Greenwood. This *Macbeth* is almost ripe; once matured, it could be superb.

RODERIC DUNNETT

ETO's 'Macbeth' and 'The Daughter of the Regiment' tour until 5 June

NETWORK

Look at the picture below. What do you see? A sleepy Scottish seaside resort? Or a nerve centre of the world's new communications network? You may be surprised. By Stephen McLaren



Rural locations like Bute have distinct commercial advantages for telecommunications-based companies such as TSC, below

Dictating the economy

Just to prove that the network economy's prime mantra is "Distance? What distance?", nurses in New York are now able to carry out home visits and produce health reports via "virtual secretaries" on Scotland's Isle of Bute. A Bute-based call-centre company, TSC, has been employed by the speech-recognition experts Speech Machines to ensure that what comes in via the Big Apple leaves via the west coast of Scotland with every Brooklyn-accented diagnosis intact and correct.

Though nursing is being targeted with a specially configured set-up, the service, which is known as Cybertranscriber, is available to anyone who likes the idea of dictating work notes remotely. To date it has appealed most to American professionals, who spend a lot of time on the road and are only too willing to dictate the outcome of their meetings into their mobile phone.

Once the dictation call has taken place, the voice message is encrypted and sent to Speech Machines' offices in Great Malvern, Hereford & Worcester, where some fifty software begins the transcription. The document then makes its way to the staff in Bute, who proof-read and format the document before e-mailing it overnight across the Atlantic to the client.

Although involving only a fraction of its 250-person workforce, TSC's new American business exemplifies why this kind of rural communications company is well-placed to flourish in the network economy. Ever-lower communication charges on cellular and long-distance phone networks, as well as the Internet, enable call-centre companies such as TSC to profit from locating themselves in out-of-the-way places where communications are cheap. Nurses don't care if their e-mail has a transcontinental luggage-tag attached, as long as the report is accurately transcribed.

Although a 50-minute ferry ride from the mainland, Bute is interwoven into British telecommunications via a vastly underused digital network. "We've been told that we have the communications equivalent of a four-lane motorway coming on to the island, which is only being used as a donkey track," says Charlie Sweeney, IT manager for TSC.

This means that TSC can run hundreds of phone and data lines into its building in Bute and use them at no significantly higher cost than if it were central London. Chances are that, if you've applied for a student loan or a fashion-store debit card in recent months, or bought a mobile phone, you've spoken to TSC's phone-and-computer brigade. You may have thought the accent quaint, but you probably didn't realise that your query was being dealt with by a person 700 miles away, who was hooked up to a farm of super-fast servers.

Rural towns offer other advantages to call-centre firms. Typically there's a pool of

under-employed labour, so wages are quite low and the people available for hire are usually better educated and skilled than city types. In its four years of existence, TSC has grown to become the biggest employer on Bute.

"We have many members of the same family working here," says the account manager, Eric Niven, as he shows me around the cavernous but buzzing main calling-room. "Often they pass in the night. Sometimes a wife leaving for the evening will pass her husband going on a night shift."

As is the case at most call centres the wages are fairly meagre, every second of the working day has to be accounted for, and stern-faced team leaders occasionally lurk behind operators and listen in to their conversation to deter any deviation from the script. But TSC claim that call-centre companies like their own have no intention of becoming the sweatshops of the future.

"We have intensive training and internal promotion for the staff and, even though we

are on an island, we've every intention of paying a fair rate for the job," Niven says.

For a company only four years old that is already turning over £4m a year, the fact that wage rates in UK call centres are below those in the US and other countries has led to swift growth, and international clients being competitively targeted. However, in recognition that this advantage could disappear overnight as other well-connected nations and regions with telephone-friendly labour enter the industry, TSC is determined to stay one step ahead by investing in new technology.

"Leased lines and Internet data transfer are clearly the way forward for us," says Charlie Sweeney. "That's much cheaper than ISDN for sending large amounts of data back to our clients' mainframes."

As well as moving much of their data traffic on to the Internet, TSC's IT division is looking at the next generation of Web-based customer feedback. TSC believes that as e-commerce blooms, so customers will inevitably want feedback as they navigate their way round a company's website.

In this scenario, a well-organised Web interface should allow customers to have all their queries answered. However, there will be times when a human voice with practical information will be required to expedite the process. When such a problem arises, an operator will intervene to guide the user through the online process, without the Web-link going down. As Internet telephony matures, all this could take place simultaneously over the Web.

This kind of technology promises longer-term rewards for rural-based communications companies such as TSC. As telephony moves on to the Net, so the communication costs of running such operations decreases still further. Devising these future interfaces will be a key element in the future profitability of call-centre firms.



Death to the cookie monster



EVA PASCOE

A glitch in your browser may be laying you open to unwelcome visitors

OVER THE past few months, my inbox has been suspiciously overflowing with an increasing amount of junk e-mail. Most missives rank from bizarre (Spreadsheet Alert, Jehovah's Witnesses or Ohio Flying University Newsletter), to mildly useful, such as Victoria's Secret daily bargains. I understand where this "spam" comes from, and generally avoid any sites that ask me for my e-mail address.

However, I suspected something fishy was going on last week when an innocent-looking e-mail proved to be advertising for the latest pyramid-selling scam in Florida. I got more than 80 e-mails per day, and I have no time for spurious junk e-mail, particularly the type that comes from the US get-rich-quick school of marketing. So I decided to find out how they got hold of my address.

After some digging, I discovered something rather sinister. Some time ago I downloaded Netscape 4.5, and it transpires that my in-box overload is caused by Netscape implementing "cookies" badly on that particular version. Cookies are tiny files that get planted on your PC's hard disk by a website that you visit, and which send details of your surfing behaviour back to the site's owner. These nuggets of information can trigger specific messages to be sent to your in-box or, more often, show you a personalised banner ad next time you are on that site. In principle, cookies are not harmful, if the site owner knows my tastes and can show me information that is relevant, that's a good thing, and I consider those to be Good Cookies.

However, the bug in Netscape's cookie implementation system has given access to my cookies not only to the websites with which I've registered, but also to a whole bunch of sites that I only browsed. The problem is that the bug allows cookies to be shared between unrelated site-owners. So if you give your e-mail address to, say, Amazon.com, the cookie will store it and allow other sites to sniff it out and use it for their junk e-mail. Soon you'll be getting lots of "personalised" alerts about their latest discounts on fake gold earrings in the shape of Ivana Trump's bottom.

Another bug in Netscape affects non-US domains, allowing cookies to be shared among sites with the same domain structure as long as it has two dots (eg a domain composed of three words, such as independent.co.uk, could access cookies set up by guardian.co.uk). The problem not only creates privacy issues for the user, leading to abuse of cookie information among competing sites, but also potentially means a lot of wasted bandwidth. The cookie sends information to the site owner every time you visit that site. If the cookie thinks that every site ending in .co.uk is your cookie-owner, then it will be sending information every time you access any site with .co.uk in its domain. Since you as a user are paying for this, then the cookie bug may cost you money, not just hassle.

One solution to the cookie crisis is to set up your browser to reject cookies. However, you will be robbing yourself of the pleasure of shopping bargains, as most e-commerce sites use cookies to implement their online shopping baskets. And if you switch off the cookies, forget about reading the trendy left-wing views and news from Guardian Unlimited, as its sites utilise mandatory cookies. Independent Online, however, will still let you in if you set your browser to refuse cookies.

So how do you kill the bad cookies and keep the good ones? There are a number of options. I have switched to Internet Explorer, as there is a tool for Windows 98 (cookies.vbs) which claims to help you manage your cookies in an intelligent manner. Bad cookies are killed, while good cookies are simply copied to a Save directory. This little "cookie-cutter" cleans up your hard drive and allows you to prevent abuses. You will need Windows Scripting Host (available from www.microsoft.com) and then you will be able to get cookies.vbs from the PC Magazine archives on www.zdnet.com.

merce sites use cookies to implement their online shopping baskets. And if you switch off the cookies, forget about reading the trendy left-wing views and news from Guardian Unlimited, as its sites utilise mandatory cookies. Independent Online, however, will still let you in if you set your browser to refuse cookies.

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Be warned, though, that the task of cleaning up your cookies will be quite time-consuming, as the average surfer or online bargain hunter gathers up to 200 cookies per quarter. I have found more than 180 of the little monsters lurking on my hard drive and it took me almost half a day to sort out the bad and the good ones.

Another way of dealing with cookies is to install a more intelligent browser. Some browsers have even added more control over the cookie monster and let you make decisions as you go. One example is a German production (download it from www.icab.de/icab_US.sit; ICab not only has a built-in cookie manager, but it is in fact a pretty good browser, with the plus of being small in size (using around 3Mb of Ram), unlike IE (the latest version is simply gigantic) or the latest version of Netscape.

For more info on cookies, check out www.cookiecentral.com. But remember, cookies are safe if they are well-implemented. It is only cook-ups that lead to problems, and these can be controlled at your end. New legislation banning marketers from exploiting sloppy practices by the browser community would not go amiss, but there always will be foul-ups on the browser end as they are getting too big and unruly to exercise any degree of control over product quality.

If you experience cookie problems or have a good solution you want to share, then please mail me. eva@never.com

BYTES ANDY OLDFIELD

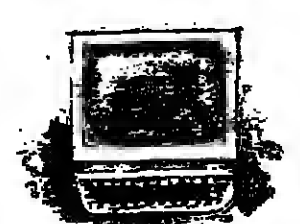
INTEL IS working with Australian content providers as part of its Web Outfitter project to build websites that are not only optimised for PCs with Pentium III processors, but restricted to them, says a report last week in Australia's *Fairfax IT News*. Ultimately, Intel wants the controversial processor serial number (PSN) to be used to identify a Pentium III PC and send it seamlessly to sites optimised to take advantage of its ability to handle streaming video, 3D and animation.

However, as many consumers are choosing to disable the feature that allows them to be tracked across the Net, Angelo Lo Certo, Intel's advertising and Internet marketing manager for Asia Pacific, says that in the meantime the websites will "interrogate the processor" and route the machine to appropriate pages. "There is no information transaction," he adds. "The CPU ID is simply a reporting-back feature, not

one of actively sending information. The basic premise is that if you have a Pentium III-based PC your Internet experience will be greatly enhanced."

The Web Outfitter Scheme is described as an after-sales benefit for Pentium III buyers. Intel is building a site of its own, linking to similarly Pentium III themed sites. "On our own site we're developing themes on various issues, like a magazine," Lo Certo says. "The type of websites we're working with then add to that theme. That means not just the traditional uses of the Internet for research and e-mail but also lifestyle-oriented material such as entertainment and learning." The sites are due to go live this month, but Intel would not identify its partners.

THE ANTI-TRUST case against Microsoft may be in recess, but it is still centre-stage in the industry. Last week it emerged that the Software and Information Industry Association, a



prominent trade group, has proposed the "death penalty" for Microsoft. In a secret 40-page report circulated among its board and Department of Justice (DOJ) lawyers, it said Microsoft should be broken up into companies selling different products or broken up into "Baby Bills", each with identical product lines. It did not recommend a plan for the break-up, saying that was for the court to decide, but it did conclude that structural reorganisation was the only way to prevent Microsoft from exerting monopoly power unfairly.

DOJ representatives refused to comment on the document, but have said that if it wins the government will ask for a special hearing to decide Microsoft's fate, such as

requirements that it allows other companies to sell versions of Windows they have modified, or limiting the deals it can make with computer manufacturers and Internet companies.

PLAYSTATION II will be launched in spring 2000, but Sony revealed some details of its 128-bit console last week. The new PlayStation, based on a processor designed by Toshiba and Sony, will be DVD-Rom based and have a rendering engine comparable in speed and data throughput with high-end workstations. MPEG2 compression will be used to store images that can be decompressed in real time as software demands. PlayStation II will be compatible with the more than 3,000 titles available for the current model.

NATIONAL OFFICIALS from the EU last week adopted a recommendation that EU privacy laws require hardware and software manufacturers to give

customers tools to control what is transmitted about them over the Net.

"It is almost impossible to use the Internet without being confronted with privacy-invasive features which carry out all kinds of processing operations of personal data in a way that is invisible to the data subjects," it said.

The recommendation specifically cited problems with web browsers and programming technologies such as Sun's Java and Microsoft's ActiveX. It also complained about "cookies" allowing websites to keep track of what a registered visitor does at a site, information often used for marketing. "The programs should be built in an easy way so people know how to turn them on or turn them off," says Alonso Blas, an official in the Dutch data protection authority.

Peter Fleischner, a Microsoft lawyer, said the company was worried that such interpretations would prevent consumers from using personalised Internet services.

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MY TECHNOLOGY

Welcome to the money-go-round

Merlyn Lowther, Chief Cashier of the Bank of England, on how cutting-edge technology keeps cash in our pockets

In the Bank of England, the piece of technology that I find most interesting is what we call the Real Time Gross Settlement System (RTGS). This is part of the UK High Value Payment System, which most people know as "Chap". The Chap system, initiated in the early Eighties, is used when you make a payment. However, it didn't have a facility for each payment to be settled immediately with the Bank of England. The money wouldn't move until the end of the day. And because the banks were settling between themselves, if anything happened each bank was exposed to the other for that amount of money.

Given the amounts that were going through, that was obviously unacceptable. The volume and value of transactions travelling through the Chap system every day is quite large. You are looking at 80,000 transactions, or over £150bn.

Introducing the RTGS eliminated the element of risk. It was a risk that could be avoided, and was therefore well worth a three-year project. Two things made RTGS possible. First, technology had moved on so that real-time payment setting had become a possibility. And the banks understood much better the nature of the risks they were taking.

I was leading the bank part of the project. The project itself took three years, from the initial go-ahead to completion. It was terrifically satisfying when the project went live. The operation of the RTGS is one of my responsibilities, but I don't have much to do with it day to day, other than to make sure everything is going smoothly, and to think about ways of development, and policy questions such as what other developments there may be, or any big issues the banks want to talk to us about.

Which brings me to another reason why RTGS is so exciting. Since January, something called the Target system has been sending euro payments right across Europe. But because the Bank of England had introduced RTGS in 1996, it meant that RTGS could be immediately integrated with the UK part of the Target system. The technology we use with RTGS is also the basis of the Pan-European Target system. Although this didn't make setting up the Pan-European Target system less of a feat, the RTGS provided the right foundation, and so made the euro project easier.

There aren't many glitches. Unsurprisingly, we had to have an extensive period of testing before we introduced RTGS.



Merlyn Lowther: 'As with most systems that involve moving a lot of money, it is highly automated'

Tom Crnky

and that took up the best part of a year. The Bank of England had developed the RTGS core within the Bank, and each of the banks also developed its own project. Plus there needed to be a central project to make sure that all the banks could communicate with a shared piece of software.

Once we had done all our develop-

ment, we tested each bank separately, as well as all of them at once. When we went live, it was remarkably smooth. That is the nature of the system; you don't take unnecessary gambles.

'As with most systems that involve moving a lot of money, we don't control the system with people; it is highly automated.

There are staff in the bank looking after the central system, and they check operations - for instance, they have to make sure that certain functions that should be happening are happening, and see whether there are any error messages. Does a file have enough capacity? Are the instant processes occurring? You need people to

respond to anything when the computer says: "hang on a minute."

Like most computer systems, it's not desperately photogenic. The main engine room is a highly secure area, and for obvious reasons we don't let people wander in. In the system control area it's just a PC on a desk.

Nevertheless, this is the most impressive bank system development in recent years. These systems are very much at the heart of banking. After all, when you are moving money it needs to be done efficiently and without errors. And that is the prime role of technology.

INTERVIEW BY JENNIFER RODGER

A computer is only as good as its master

Computers have redefined the culture of our age, but they will always take second place to the ability of the human brain. By Rachelle Thackray

EVERYONE is familiar with the term "digital age". Even if few of us know precisely what it means, we all associate it with the off-breaking and ever-higher waves of modern technology from which, we enthusiastically imagine, will emerge a brave new future.

At the height of this age, technology will produce fruits of which we have only dreamt. The mundane decisions of life, together with tedious chores such as manually turning on the television set, sending a letter through the post or heaving home a bag of groceries, will long since have been taken out of our

hands by computers that anticipate our every need.

Yet the children of the Seventies who fantasised in their school compositions about "What It Will Be Like in the Year 2000" are still waiting for the advent of personalised travel capsules and know-it-all robots which once seemed sure to follow in the footsteps of R2D2. Are children of the Nineties just as misguided in believing that such inventions of the mind are likely to become reality?

Charles Jonscher, who trained in electrical sciences at Cambridge and now runs an investment firm, is refreshingly sceptical of the

assumption that computers, in their various incarnations, hold the keys to richer life in the 21st century. In his new book, he insists instead that their role will always be secondary to the human beings who designed and created them.

A more interesting issue is the way that computers have helped to redefine the identity and the culture of the age. He writes: "We certainly do not need to buy into a new philosophy of life, a sort of cyber-ontology in which the meaning of existence has been solved by deciding that we are computers." And he adds: "The computer revo-

BOOK REVIEW

WIRED LIFE: WHO ARE WE IN THE DIGITAL AGE?
BY CHARLES JONSCHER.
BANTAM, £14.99

lution is a subplot in a bigger revolution: the explosion of human knowledge in all its forms."

With his argument that humans, rather than technology, will always have the upper hand, Jonscher begins a fascinating unravelling of

where the "digital age" has sprung from, with all its limitations and possibilities. While lauding the technology which could now record every moment of a human life by means of a tiny bit of silicon implanted in the brain - the apocryphal "soul-catcher" chip - he points out that the human brain itself has 20 billion neurons, capable of 100 trillion connections (a single neuron can connect with 80,000 others). "Comparing a neuron to a single silicon switch?" he asks. "The intelligence of a single-cell organism less evolved than a neuron, such as a paramecium, is such that it can

navigate towards food and negotiate obstacles, recognise danger and retreat from it. How does your PC compare?"

There are some illuminating definitions here: knowledge, notes the author, is a state of being, while information, which comes from the root "to inform", is transitive, and to be used fleetingly.

Jonscher also levels the stun-gun at some sacred cows, such as the idea that artificial intelligence could evolve to take over the world in the manner described in Philip Kerr's thriller novel *Gridiron*. And after a delve through the scientific theories

lying behind the evolution of IT, he goes on to trace its development, with its impact on and creation of multimedia and the Internet, economic progress and the "productivity paradox", and the technologies of tomorrow.

For anyone who has ever asked what the IT revolution is all about, and how it will affect them, this readable and authoritative account, with its occasional dashes of dry humour, will fill some of the gaps.

Best of all, Jonscher never loses sight of his own argument. As he succinctly sums up: "We must not mistake gigabytes for wisdom."

WEBSITES

BILL PANNIFER

Coin-Note-Sign
<http://www.cryptic.demon.co.uk/euro.html>

The Internet artist Chris Byrne suspects that the bland design prototypes for the new European banknotes may be "more for the convenience of global corporations than for citizens". So he is offering people the chance to create more interesting versions. The templates from the official EU site are supplied as a basis, and the resulting gallery of customised notes is displayed. These incorporate war movie posters, neo-Stalinist tributes to the New World Order, McDonald's and Coca-Cola signs and a warning that "one euro does not one love make". A more optimistic design tells us to smile at our fellow Europeans ("souriez aux voisins le matin"). The collection will be shown at a French art festival later this month. Byrne hopes to print the banknotes and use them to buy drinks at the bar.

Filip.com
<http://www.itulip.com/>
Another critique of economics can be found



here, in the form of a flower-powered lecture on the dangers of the Internet investment boom. In 17th-century Holland, fortunes were made and lost speculating on exotic tulip bulbs, with lessons, the site suggests, for the current overvaluing of shares in Net-related companies. In 1837, a single hubb was sold for more than £1m in today's money. Other awful precedents are traced in railway, radio and telegraph industries, all cases in which naive enthusiasm for new technology led to investors losing their shirts. A favourite cautionary tale concerns the British entrepreneur who in 1720 launched "a company for carrying on an undertaking of great advantage, but no one to know what it is", and reaped handsome rewards before absconding. In the

The Future Looms
<http://adac.artec.org.uk/fut>
urelooms/cells/HOME.

HTM This meditation on cloth-weaving and computing also juxtaposes history and the modern digital world. A key figure seems to be Joseph-Marie Jacquard (1752-1834), who developed a system of perforated cards to control looms. The complex, multi-authored art site recently won a prize at Berlin's Transmediale 99 festival, and compares the experience of 19th-century workers in Batley, West Yorkshire, with a computer age in which "both technology and gender might be thought of differently", but often are not. Cloth-weaving is associated with story-weaving in an ambitious if sometimes hard-to-read

interplay of texts and textiles. The piece incorporates the voices of Batley schoolchildren and displays some highly creative use of Shockwave.

PostPet
<http://www.sony.com.sg/postpet>

In Japan, this "virtual postman" software is claimed already to be a best-seller, but Sony in Singapore is now test-marketing an English language release. A choice of appealing little cyberpets will not only deliver your e-mails but, it is claimed, also "learn" to write to you, reply to messages, and even fall in love or quarrel with other pets. This site introduces the available creatures and explains how users can relate to their newfound friends. So meet Mini-Rabbit Mippi, Mongrel Cat Furo, Tortoise Sumiko and Teddy Bear Momo, a dancing bear almost winsome enough to rival the Grateful Dead's version.

Send interesting, quirky or, at a pinch, cool site recommendations to websites@dircom.co.uk

Focus on colourful ideas

LAST YEAR I looked at the tools of the trade for web designers, focusing on shareware and freeware applications to download and then run on your local machine (www.independent.co.uk/net/980224ne/story6.htm). Now, let's take a look at resources to run on the web itself.

Colour Choosing a colour scheme is one of the greatest challenges a web designer faces. Here are a few online tools to aid you.

WebMaster's Colour Lab
www.visibone.com/colorlab/
Where to start when trying to define your colour palette? It helps to see how the colours work together. Visibone's useful tool gives a well-organised colour wheel of all browser-safe colours. Clicking on one causes a swatch to appear in an adjacent frame. Click on more, and they appear next to it for comparison.

Color Center
www.hidaho.com/colorcenter/cc.html
What will all those colours look like in context? Will the link colours stand out against the background or just get lost? The Color Center allows you to select link, text and background

WEB DESIGN



JASON CRANFORD TEAGUE

colours and see what they would look like in a web page.

Color Mix
www.colormix.com/
Tired of the same old 216 browser-safe colours? Color mix allows you to form up to 10 million different colours. It takes a small dot of each one and places them side by side. Your eye then blends them together. This will not look as smooth as a solid colour, and some combinations look strange, but it is a good way to add variety to your website.

Graphics For the most part we handle graphics with sophisticated

not to mention expensive, software. But there is one site that may go one step beyond this.

GIF Wizard
www.gifwizard.com/
Does your site take forever to download? With GIF Wizard you can upload a single image from your hard drive, or point it to a URL to analyse an entire site's worth of images. The site then delivers a screen with the original image and optimised versions. It costs a few hundred dollars, but you don't have to pay for software upgrades.

Coding When creating HTML or Cascading Style Sheet code www.independent.co.uk/net/980407ne/story8.html, we have to worry not just about cross-browser compatibility but also cross-platform and backward compatibility. Never fear, the truth is out there on the Web.

W3C's CSS1 Test Suite
www.w3.org/Style/CSS/test/
So how do you know what CSS capabilities your favourite browser supports? Run it through the test suite - especially useful if you are creating a site with CSS or Dynamic HTML and need to know in advance that the CSS will work.

Web Site Garage
www.websitegarage.com/
Tune up your site in the Web Site Garage. Give it a URL and it will deliver, for free, a report on the site, rating browser compatibility, load time, dead links, spelling and HTML on a scale from excellent to poor. For \$10 a month you also get access to online applications that allow you to optimise your site.

Music Whistle while you work. Or:

Radio Free Underground
www.stitch.com/studio/
Not really a design "tool", but it's easier to work with some good tunes playing. This site puts together a mix of 40-50 different songs from your musical preferences. It then plays the songs through your RealAudio player in stereo. Every time you run it, the mix will be completely different. As the Moz said, "Hang the DJ."

If you see online resources that you think deserve attention, drop me a line at jason@webbedenvironments.com. "DHTML for the World Wide Web". Visit is available at bookshops. See www.webbedenvironments.com for an archive of this column.

One-stop shop for the professionals

Adobe's industry-standard design packages have made it the second largest software company in the world. By Stephen Pritchard

Look on the computer of any design or publishing professional, and there is bound to be at least one piece of Adobe software.

Adobe - creator of the Pagemaker desktop publishing package and the market-leading imaging software Photoshop - is synonymous with the design and print industries.

Adobe is the world's second-largest desktop software company, after Microsoft, and its annual revenues are just short of \$1bn (£624m).

When Adobe was founded in 1982 by Chuck Geschke and John Warnock, the idea of desktop publishing (DTP) was dismissed by all but the most forward-thinking designers. DTP is now a mainstream computer application for design professionals, and for office workers and home computer users too.

More powerful PCs, low-cost colour inkjet printers and cheap digital cameras have made digital photography a mass market application, but the Internet has had the greatest impact.

Digital cameras come into their own on the Net, whether to capture images for a website, or to send a snapshot to a relative. "When we acquired Photoshop, we would have been surprised if we had shipped a few hundred copies a quarter," Geschke recalls. "We did not appreciate how quickly digital photography and high-quality, low-cost inkjet printers would develop."

"We started our company focused around building the tools and technology for publishing, originally print publishing," he explains. "We continue to stay in the publishing

business, but the entire process of going from concept to print has migrated to electronic."

"We have had the good fortune to build a lot of the products that are part of that."

Since the Eighties, Adobe has diversified, most notably by acquiring Photoshop. The company has gone on to lead the market for photographic imaging software - 76 per cent of Web designers use Photoshop, and 93 per cent of all photos on the Web have been scanned, retouched, manipulated or compressed using the application. Adobe also produces software for web page design, typography, corporate

creativity. Most design packages can manipulate only elements that are on the pasteboard, so designers have to move them, work on them, and move them back. Adobe believes practical improvements like this, and the facility to have two different-sized views of a page open at once will appeal to the professionals who left Pagemaker for QuarkXpress.

Adobe needs InDesign to be successful - 1998 was a difficult year financially, especially because of the economic downturn in Asia. "It was not our best-performing year," Geschke admits. "We would have had close to 15 per cent growth if Japan had performed even as well

as in 1997. Japan has historically been in excess of 20 per cent of our revenue."

InDesign is the first major new product Adobe has created in-house for some time. Much of the company's recent expansion came through acquisitions. The most recent purchase was GoLive, publishers of the Cyberstudio Web design package. "You have to have a balanced portfolio of both acquisition and internal growth," says Geschke.

The GoLive deal illustrates the importance Adobe is placing on the Internet. It plans to be a one-stop shop for Web page authors. The Internet already accounts for a significant proportion of Adobe's revenues. "I cannot calculate how much of our Photoshop revenue comes from the Web," Geschke says. "What I do know is that Adobe has made more profit off tools sold for creating content on the Web than any other software publisher."

Geschke believes that Web pages lag behind their printed counterparts, especially in quality. Publishers realise the advantages in distributing their material online: it is quicker and cheaper than print. But, as anyone who has tried to print out a Web page knows, the process is awkward and the result ugly.

Adobe is creating new standards for Web pages. The company developed PGML, (Precision Graphics Markup Language) or SVG, (Scalable Vector Graphic), which is being adopted as an Internet standard. PGML, Geschke believes, will be to the Web what Postscript was to desktop publishing.

PGML uses vector graphics - mathematical descriptions of images - to create compact files that automatically adjust their resolution for display or printing out. A PGML file should look as good on paper as on a computer screen.

For Geschke, PGML is the key to narrowing the gap between the reality of the Internet, and popular expectations. "In the mass market, the quality of what people look at on the Web will be judged in comparison with television. That is what people expect. It looks like a television set, so it should have the quality and imagery of a television set," he says. "What we're doing is bringing the Web up to the level of functionality and quality people expect."

'When we acquired Photoshop, we would have been surprised if we had shipped more than a few hundred copies a quarter'

documentation and video editing. Pagemaker, its DTP application, has done less well recently. Adobe bought Aldus, the company which developed Pagemaker, in 1994. By then, Pagemaker was already losing ground to QuarkXpress. Today, Quark is the professional's DTP program of choice.

Geschke acknowledges the work Adobe has to do to win back market share from Quark. Last week, at the Seybold publishing conference in Boston, Adobe unveiled its response: InDesign. Adobe's philosophy is to create software that lets designers design, rather than putting artificial constraints on their

as in 1997. Japan has historically been in excess of 20 per cent of our revenue."

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The man in the picture: Chuck Geschke believes that Adobe must win back market share

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Sussex	A/P	COBOL &/or Unix &/or RDBMS	£20 - 45K
Wiltshire	A/P	Prefer C or C++ (Fortran or Pascal acceptable)	£22,500
Exeter	Programmer	Visual Basic and/or C++ on Windows NT	C £28K
Wiltshire	Software Engineer	C, C++, UNIX, TCP/IP	£35K + bens
South Wales	A/P	Oracle, Developer 2000, Forms 4.5, Report 2.5	£27K + bens
Bucks	Programmer	2 yrs New Era 2.2 Informix, Windows 95/NT	To 35K
Bristol	A/P	Databasic, Pick	£30K
Reading	Junior Developer	Visual Basic, &/or Visual C++, MFC	To 25K
Wiltshire	Developer	12 months Visual Basic, SQL, IDBMS	£24K + bens
Surrey	A/P	Ingres, UNIX	£30K + bens
Berkshire	Technical Authors	Technical Publications	To 30K
Surrey	Computer Technician	Novell, NT, Networking, MS Office	£20-22K + bens
Various	Sales	Financial and/or Software	OTE £100K + bens
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With this top Electronics Design Company you will never have a better opportunity to get right to the heart of the matter. As one of a small team of Software Engineers, you will be dedicated to providing development and support expertise - using embedded C with some assembly for the critical applications for various microprocessors and microcontrollers - to one of the leading GP teams in the areas of engine, gearbox and throttle control systems. Together with a good degree in Computing/Electronics you should have 3 years' experience in a real-time embedded software environment.

Consult the Future

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Consultants and Project Managers are in huge demand! Several companies in fields such as Defence, Finance, Telecommunications and the Space race are on the lookout for exceptional people. Are you one? Ideally you will bring a Degree or HND equivalent with at least 2 years experience in a software related role to one of the above, or at least demonstrate the potential to be trained and developed in these areas. So if you're serious about your future and want to succeed, then I suggest you get the ball rolling and either give me a call or send your CV. But remember the clock is ticking!

Ref: PM0041

Nothing 4UT Give me a call!

SWP Contact: Frazer Martin

2nd Floor, 89 The Marlowes, Harlow, Essex, Essex, Essex, Essex

Recruitment Tel: 01442 212555 Fax: 01442 231555

Web: http://www.swp.co.uk

Comms/Control

ISDN, LAN/WAN, TCP/IP

Backs and forth to £40K + Bens
A leading supplier of Network solutions which supports Audio and Video applications also having WAN/LAN with IP have now stepped up their recruitment, principally to work within the token ring domain. Their recruitment, principally to work within the token ring domain. Engineers with C, C++, and ideally some experience in Assembler, PASCAL, ISDN or TCP/IP should send their CV, immediately quoting the reference below. However less experienced Engineers should call for an initial chat. You will benefit from exceptional benefits, extra training not to mention excellent remuneration. Ref: JAB/0002

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South East to £40K
This seriously exciting company are looking for bright people with experience in at least two of the following: C, C++, Assembler, JAVA, HTML, MPEG and Microcontrollers and a 2.2 BEng minimum. The lucky ones will be working on Digital Video and Multimedia applications and given the opportunity to progress to a project/managerial role. CVs should be forwarded to me following a call by the end of next month. Ref: JAB/0003

GSM Software

Berkshire £25-45K + Bens
The dynamic company is spearheading their way to the top in the latest advancement in GSM technology. Due to their success, they require a variety of Engineers from Junior Software with 6 months experience, to Senior Design/Project Managers with 5 years experience in Software Design, Test or Development. To qualify for an interview you should have a good Degree/Professional and experience in C, C++, Windows or UNIX. Within 3-5 years, electronic communication will be extremely advantageous. Ring me now... Ref: JAB/0004

SWP Contact: Joseph Sewell on

01442 493508

(Samp'gpm eves & weekends)

RECRUITMENT Tel: 01442 212555 Fax: 01442 231555

Web: http://www.swp.co.uk

Business Solutions Online require IT Professionals to fill various positions. Applicants will ideally be educated to degree level with a minimum of two years relevant experience in any of the following skills:

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10

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up to £31K + benefits

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Responsible for the technical evaluation and selection of suppliers, qualification of suppliers manufacturing processes and parts and management of parts quality. The ideal candidate would have a mechanical or electrical degree, experience of vendor quality management within the electronics industry, and be highly motivated to deliver the benefits early involvement of the supply chain can bring to parts and process design. Positions are available across a wide range of experience from Assistant Procurement Engineers to Principle Engineer.

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You should have a good basic education and a degree in computer studies or related subject. An understanding of database principles and the ability to manipulate data through different types of application is vital, together with excellent communications skills and a methodical approach to problem solving. Previous work experience in a similar role would be advantageous, although this is not a prerequisite.

Written applications should be sent to Caroline Cording, Group HR Manager,
Perry Group plc, Cambridge House, Bluecoats Avenue, Hertford SG14 1PB.

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Please apply to:The Helios Group London, Walbrook House,
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SOFTWARE ENGINEER

- Three years software development experience
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If you are interested in any of these positions send your CV to:
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